

3Kc

9

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. *Roche*  
VOLUME I.



THE  
HISTORY

OF  
Lady Sophia Sternheim

ATTEMPTED FROM THE  
G. F. S. T. M. O. R. N.

OF  
MR. W. F. L. A. N. D.

VOL. I.  
VOLUME II  
L O N D O N

PRINTED FOR  
MR. JOSEPH COLLIER

AND SOLD BY  
T. JONES, AT CLIFFORD'S INN-GATE,  
FETTER LANE, NEAR FLEET-STREET.

MDCCLXXVI

*K. Lichtenfels (soon)*

*K. de Roche (M.S.)*

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
Lady Sophia Sternheim.

ATTEMPTED FROM THE  
GERMAN  
OF  
MR. WIELAND:  
VOL. I.

LONDON,  
PRINTED FOR  
MR. JOSEPH COLLYER,

AND SOLD BY  
T. JONES, AT CLIFFORD'S-INN-GATE,  
FETTER-LANE, near FLEET-STREET.

MDCCLXXVI.

76

HISTORICAL  
PREFACE

Lady Sophia Stowe

BY THE

Author of the

CTRANSLATOR.

THE  
published by the  
ingenious Mr. Stowe, who  
assumed the character of Editor;  
but he was generally esteemed the  
Author, till it was known that it  
was written by SOPHIA, the wife  
of Mr. Dr. A. ROCHE, counsellor  
to the Bishop of Treves, one of  
the





# P R E F A C E

BY THE

## T R A N S L A T O R.

**T**HE following work was published in German by the ingenious Mr. WIELAND, who assumed the character of Editor; but he was generally esteemed the Author, till it was known that it was written by SOPHIA, the wife of Mr. DR LA ROCHE, counsellor to the Elector of Treves, one of

the most amiable and ingenious ladies of the age. Mr. WIELAND; instead of a preface, introduces the work by a letter to this lady, without mentioning her name, in which he gives the highest encomiums to the amiable characters here exhibited to the view of the reader; and observes that, in reading a hundred passages, he could not help exclaiming, "May my daughter learn  
"to think and act like SOPHIA  
"STERNHEIM! May Heaven  
"grant me the favour of seeing  
"imprinted on her soul, that noble  
"frankness—that invariable good-  
"ness—that delicate sensibility of  
"whatever is true and beautiful—  
"that aptitude to exercise every  
"virtue

"virtue which derives its source  
 "from an interior principle—that  
 "sincere piety, which, instead of  
 "throwing a gloom over the mind,  
 "is the most lovely, and the best  
 "of all the virtues—that art of  
 "considering in a just light all the  
 "objects of life, of setting a just  
 "value on fortune, splendor and  
 "pleasure: in a word, may all the  
 "happy ornaments of the heart  
 "and the mind, which I admire in  
 "that beautiful image, be united  
 "in that lovely creature, who,  
 "though still an infant, gives such  
 "sweetness to my present mo-  
 "ments, and such dear hopes of  
 "my days to come!"

virtue

It



viii    **PREFACE, &c.**

It will be needless for me to enlarge on the merits of this performance, after quoting the above sentiments and expressions of a person of Mr. WIELAND's distinguished merit.

**JOSEPH COLLYER.**

THE  
HISTORY  
OF

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM.

MY complying with your desire in committing to paper the events of Lady STERNHEIM's life, scarce entitles me to your thanks. You know I had the happiness of being brought up with that excellent lady, and believe me, it gives me a very sensible pleasure, that I have an opportunity of employing myself in a task that will recall to my mind the sacred remembrance of the virtues and endowments of a person who is an honour to our sex, and even to human nature.

The father of my dear lady SIDNEY was Colonel STERNHEIM, the only son of a professor at W. who had given him an excellent education. He was early distinguished by his noble sentiments and goodness of heart. At the university he contracted an intimacy with the young baron P. whom he afterwards accompanied in his travels, and for whom he had such an affection, that he entered with him  
B into

into the army. By his conversation and example the baron, whose mind was naturally haughty and impetuous, was humanised, and he became of so mild and engaging a disposition, that his parents almost idolized the young gentleman who had thus reclaimed their darling son. An unforeseen event separated them: the decease of the baron's elder brother obliged him to quit the service, and apply himself to the management of his estate. Meanwhile STERNHEIM who enjoyed the highest esteem of the officers and soldiers, continuing in the service, rose to the rank of colonel and the prince ennobled him. Merit and not fortune has preferred you, said the general, in the presence of many persons of distinction when, he delivered him, in the name of his sovereign, his commission and patent of nobility. He afterwards worthily maintained the reputation he had acquired, and all his following campaigns, served to give him opportunities of exerting his valour, his greatness of soul, and his humanity.

On the return of peace, his first wish was to see his intimate friend, with whom he had constantly corresponded. His heart knew of no other connexion; for his father, whom he had lost long before, being a foreigner at W. had left there no relations of his son. Colonel STERNHEIM accordingly went to P. there to enjoy the tranquil delights of friendship. Baron P. his friend had espoused a very amiable lady, and lived with his mother and two sisters at a very agreeable seat left him by his father, where he was frequently visited by the most distinguished



guished families in the neighbourhood, and where he dedicated his more retired hours to reading, and rural improvements. Sometimes they had little concerts, the younger sister playing on the spinnet, and the elder on the lute, which the baron and some of his retinue accompanied with their voices.

The elder sister's disposition, however, threw a damp on their happiness. She was the only child of baron P. by lady WATSON, his first wife, whom he married while he was envoy in England. This young lady, with all the endearing gentleness of an English woman, seemed likewise to have inherited from her mother an air of melancholy. A settled gravity had spread itself over her countenance. She delighted in retirement, and she employed herself in reading the choicest books; yet did not neglect conversing with the family, when they were free from company.

Her brother, the baron, being in fear of her health, neglected nothing that could divert her, or enable him to discover the cause of her settled dejection. Sometimes he conjured her, to open her heart, to him her affectionate brother; this she would return with a serious look, thank him for his concern, with tears entreat him to let her secret remain in her own bosom, and only continue to love her. This increased his uneasiness; he apprehended that some false step might be the source from whence this melancholy sprang; but tho' he kept a most watchful eye over all her actions, he could not discover the least trace that could

countenance any such apprehension. She was always under his or her mother's eye; conversed only with the family, and avoided all kind of mixed intercourse. Once she so far prevailed with herself as to come into company, and from her chearfulness on this occasion, the family had hopes that her gloom would be dispersed.

This pleasing expectation was farther confirmed by the unexpected arrival of colonel STERNHEIM, whom the whole family had heard highly prais'd, and whose letters had made them often admire the excellence of his heart, and his many extraordinary perfections. He surprized them one evening as they were all walking together in the garden. The baron's joy and exultation on this occasion were as incapable of description as the eager inquisitive attention of the others, and the colonel's noble and engaging behaviour, soon diffus'd a like joy through the whole family.

The colonel was soon introduced to the nobility in the neighbourhood, as one for whom they had a particular esteem, and he made one in all their visits and assemblies. To the baron's family he occasionally related the most interesting incidents of his life; particularly the memorable actions at which he had been present, and in a manner which encreased the family's opinion both of his intellects and his heart. On the other hand, they represented to him in the strongest colours the pleasures of a country life. The baron enumerated the advantages accruing to the vassals from their lord's

lord's personal residence; the old lady dwelt on the endearing offices of the mother of a family, while the young ladies represented the various entertainments and recreations to which every season of the year invited them. These discourses gave rise to the following question.

Would my worthy friend be willing to pass the remainder of his life in the country?

Yes, my dear baron, provided it were on my own estate, and in the neighbourhood of yours.

That may be easily brought to pass; for there is a pretty estate to be sold within a mile from hence, and as I have free access to the house, we will go and take a view of it to-morrow.

Accordingly the baron and the colonel went thither accompanied by the minister of the parish, a very worthy man, who afterwards entertained the ladies with the description of an affecting scene that passed between the two friends. The baron, after leading the colonel over the grounds, took him into the house, which besides its elegant garden, had a delightful situation, and here they breakfasted.

The colonel expressed his entire satisfaction, admired every object, and with some earnestness asked the baron whether so charming a villa was to be sold.

It is: and do you like it?

Entirely; and the rather as it will not draw me to any great distance from what I most love.

Oh my friend! said the baron, how happy do you make me! this estate I myself secured three years ago, merely with a view of offer-



ing it to you. I have repaired and improved the house, and here in this parlour where we now are, I have often pray'd for the preservation of your life, and eagerly long'd for your presence. What joy does the thought give me, that the guide of my youth will now be a witness of my life!

The colonel was so warmly affected at his friend's noble behaviour, that he was unable to express his joy and acknowledgments; he assured him that he would there spend his days; but at the same time desired to know what the estate cost. The baron explained himself on that subject, and shewed him the deed of purchase. The revenues it produced appeared to be greater than could be expected from the sum given to purchase it; but the baron protested that he would accept of no more than what he had advanced.

My worthy friend, said the baron, for these three years past, I have laid out the whole income of the estate in repairs and improvements, and the satisfaction, the delight of thinking that I was providing for the repose of the best of men, in whose engaging company I should renew the delights of my youth; that his advice and example will secure and add to my felicity, and may contribute to the welfare of my family—These thoughts have been my recompense.

On their return, the baron introduced the colonel to his mother and sisters as a new neighbour, and all expressed themselves highly delighted at the certainty of frequently enjoying his company.

Hav-

Having taken possession of the manor, which consisted only of two villages, he repaired to the mansion house, and after giving an entertainment to the neighbours, he amused himself with building and planting, added two elegant wings to his house, and formed a delightful grove with walks in the English taste. But amidst the assiduity with which he carried on these improvements, a thoughtful gloom was now and then observed to overspread his countenance. The baron himself perceived it; but at first seemed to take no notice of it; till in the following autumn he observed some striking indications of a very great change in his disposition, which filled him with apprehensions that rendered him very uneasy. STERNHEIM was now less frequent in his visits, less communicative and chearful in his discourse, and sooner returned home. The change was visible to every one, and even his own domestics laid to heart their master's unusual melancholy.

The baron, whose uneasiness was now increased by his eldest sister's having relapsed into her former lowness of spirits, went to the colonel's, and finding him alone and pensive, embraced him with affectionate sympathy. O my friend! said he, how frail, how unsubstantial are even the most noble, the most pure and refined joys of the human heart! For a long time I wanted nothing but your company; I now see you—I even hold you in my arms—yet I see you dejected, and you appear reserved and displeased. I have lost your affection, your confidence

fidence. But speak freely, have you made too great a sacrifice to friendship in fixing your residence here? if you have, cease to torment yourself; your happiness is dearer to me than my own.—I'll take the estate again—its value is, in my esteem, now encreas'd, since every part of it will renew the pleasing remembrance of such a valuable friend.

Here he was silent, tears stood in his eyes, which being fixed on the face of his friend, he perceived him agitated with strong emotions. The colonel instantly rising ardently embraced him, crying, Let not my incomparable friend harbour the thought, that there is any abatement in my friendship and confidence; and oh forbear thinking that I repent the resolution I have taken of passing my remaining days near you.—No, no, I value the blessing of having you for my neighbour more than you can conceive—but I am forced to struggle with a passion from which my heart has been hitherto free. I flatter'd myself with possessing a tolerable share of sense and disinterestedness; but alas! much do I yet want of that strength and firmness which the state of my mind requires. But it is impossible for me to enter into this subject with you. Solitude is all that I want, and my own heart must be my only confident.

I know your steady virtue, said the baron, pressing his hand, and do not question the assurances you are pleased to give me of the continuance of your friendship: but tell me, pray, how comes it that I see you so seldom,



that your visits are so short and constrain'd, and that you leave us with an air so cold?

Cold, my friend! what I, leave you in a manner so cold? my visits to you short and cold! Ah did my friend but know the eagerness with which I post thither, and the affection which makes me stand hours together at my window viewing the dear house, the center of all my desires and of all my happiness! O my dear friend!—

This put the worthy baron for some moments on the rack, from the apprehension that his friend had conceived a passion for his lady, and had avoided the house the more effectually to extinguish the guilty flame. He therefore resolved to appear more reserved, and more closely to watch the colonel's behaviour. STERNHEIM remained immoveable, and the baron was under a tumult of jarring passions, and not without even alarming fears. At length, breaking silence, he cried, I venerate my friend's secret: I respect it too much to wrest it from him. Yet you have given me room to think that a part of this secret concerns my family. May I not at least be informed, who amongst us.—

No; no. I entreat you to ask me no questions. Leave me to myself. The baron ceased his enquiries, and went away dejected and buried in thought.

The next day the colonel waited upon him, to ask his pardon for letting him depart with so little cordiality, which he said had not allowed him to close his eyes during the whole night.

My dear baron, added he, honour lays a restraint on my tongue. But question not my heart, and continue to love me.

Being prevailed on to stay the whole day at P. lady SOPHIA and lady CHARLOTTE were earnestly pressed by their brother, to strive to divert his friend; but the colonel mostly conversed with the old lady, and the baroness. In the evening lady CHARLOTTE touched the lute, in which she was accompanied by the baron and two officers of his household, and lady SOPHIA, after many entreaties sung.

The colonel stood at a window, where behind the curtain, which was partly drawn, he listened to the little family concert, with which he was so taken up as not to observe, that the baroness was so near him, as to hear him utter the following ejaculation. Lovely SOPHIA! dearer than my life! why art thou the sister of my friend! why does the superiority of thy birth oppose this warm, this honourable affection!

The lady was struck at this discovery; but to save him the confusion into which he would naturally have fallen, had he imagined she had overheard him, instantly withdrew, overjoy'd that she could now remove the baron's sollicitude concerning the colonel's melancholy, and on the family's retiring to rest communicated her discovery to him. The baron now saw the meaning of the colonel's justification of himself from the charge of coldness. Tell me, said he to his lady, should you like the colonel as a brother-in-law, as well as you do now, as my friend?

Most

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 11

Most certainly, my dear. His eminent merit fully counterbalances any disadvantages of descent.

Excellent creature! cried the baron. I now depend on your assistance to overcome any prejudices in my mother and SOPHY.

I am less afraid of their prejudices than of a prior inclination which has taken possession of SOPHY's heart. I don't know the object: but I am sure she is in love, and has been so for some time. Of this I am persuaded from some passages of her writing which I found in her escrutoire, wherein she complains of her destiny, and laments a separation: but though I have ever since kept a watchful eye over her, my discoveries have reached no farther. I'll talk with her, said the baron, and see whether some insight into her heart is not to be obtained.

The next morning the baron went to lady SOPHIA, and after some affectionate enquiries after her health and spirits, took her by the hand. My dear SOPHY, said he, you say you are perfectly well; why then have you that uneasiness in your looks, that languid faintness in your voice? Why are you so fond of being alone? and why are those frequent sighs?—Did you but know the concern your melancholy has long given me, you would not conceal it. It shall be my care to promote your marriage with the man you love.

Affected by these words, she was so far from drawing away her hand, that she pressed his to her breast, and with her head reclined on his bosom, O brother, said she, you break my  
B 6 heart.



heart. I love you as my own life and can't bear the thought of giving you pain. Believe that I am happy. Let me beg of you to bear with me, and never more mention a word about marriage.

Why so child? it will be making some worthy man superlatively happy.

And a worthy man would likewise make me happy: but I know—Here bursting into tears she could say no more.

O SOPHY! no longer check that emotion of confidence: but deposit your sensations in a brother's trusty bosom—I am persuaded there is a man with whom your heart is linked.—

No brother! I am a stranger to any such connection.

Do you say so in earnest SOPHY?

Yes, brother I do!—

Here the baron embraced her—Oh that you had the firm virtue of your mother! What do you mean, brother? answered she with some amazement: In what have I transgressed the rules of the strictest virtue?

In nothing yet, my dear; but you may if you suffer yourself to be governed more by prejudices than by reason and virtue.

You quite alarm me brother; in what am I in danger of departing from reason and virtue?

Do not mistake me, my dear, I have no such harsh meaning; your case, in my opinion, contradicts neither virtue nor reason, yet may weaken in your mind the just claims of both.

Speak

Speak plainly, brother; for I am now determined to conceal nothing from you; but to answer agreeably to my most hidden sentiments.

As you assure me, SOPHY, of your being a stranger to any particular connection, give me leave to ask you, what you would do, should a person of distinguished sense and virtue; but not of the ancient nobility, profess himself your humble servant, and apply for your hand?

At these words she was seized with a visible discomposure; when the baron thinking to put a speedy end to it continued, and should this person be the very friend to whom your brother is indebted for the reformation of his morals, and consequently for the principal happiness of his life; tell me, SOPHY, what would you do?

Here she made no answer; but sunk into a deep pensiveness, and her colour went and came. Forgive me SOPHIA, for throwing you into this disorder; but the colonel is in love with you, and this passion is the only cause of his melancholy, from his fear of success. For my part, I freely declare, that I could gladly reward, by your marriage to him, the many good offices which I have received from him; yet, if your heart does not agree to it, forget all I have said.

The young lady endeavoured to recover her fluttering spirits, and after a silent effort of some continuance, asked the baron, Are you certain, brother, that the colonel loves me? —The baron now related his conversation with the colonel, and the heart-felt wish which  
his

his lady had overheard.—Brother, said SOPHIA, I am sincere, and you so well deserve my entire confidence, that I make no scruple of declaring, that the colonel is the only man living to whom I could give my hand.

The disparity of birth, then, is no objection with you.

No; not in the least. His abilities, his accomplishments and virtues, together with his friendship for you, amply compensate for any deficiency with respect to his ancestors.

Generous girl! that observation, dearest SOPHIA, seals my felicity.—But why did you so earnestly conjure me not to talk to you of marriage?

Because I had not the least prospect of its ever being accomplished, answered she in a low voice, and reclined blushing on her delighted brother; who, kissing her hand, said, with transport, What a blessing will this hand be to my friend! and I shall be the happy instrument of his obtaining it! But, child, you must expect a severe opposition from the old lady and from CHARLOTTE. Do you think you shall be able to stand your ground?

Yes, yes, brother. You shall see that I have an English heart—but having now answered all your questions, I must now put one to you: What were your thoughts of my melancholy on the cause of which you have so long importuned me?

I really attributed it to a secret passion, and from your reserve had not the best opinion of its object. So



LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 15

So my brother little thought that his friend's letters, which he used to read to us, and the particulars be related concerning that excellent man, could make any impression on my heart.

Then, dearest SOPHIA, it was my friend's conspicuous merit that rendered you so reserved and thoughtful—Happy man to be beloved by a deserving woman who had never seen him, merely on account of his virtue! Heavens bless my sister for her frankness! Now can I relieve my friend from the anguish of his heart.

Go, brother, and kindly endeavour to set the colonel's heart at rest; but don't overlook a proper regard for your sister. A young woman, you know, is not to make the first advances.

You may be very easy, my dear, on that article. Your honour is mine.

Here leaving her, he went to his lady with the joyful account of his discovery; and his next business was to ride to the colonel, whom he found wrapped in gloom and pensiveness. Many subjects were suddenly started and dropped, and an extreme disorder betrayed itself in his whole behaviour—Dear colonel, have I disturbed you, said the baron, in the accent of the respectful friendship of a youth for his governor.

Yes, my dear baron, you have disturbed me in a resolution I was forming to make an excursion for some time.

An excursion? and without company?—

Worthy baron, I am sensible that the present state of my mind gives a disagreeable cast  
to

6 THE HISTORY OF

to my behaviour and conversation. I'll try whether travelling and a little dissipation will not amend it.

May I not probe your heart a little farther? Can't I contribute to its repose?

You have done enough for me! you are the joy of my life. What is amiss, time and prudence must set right.

The last time, STERNHEIM we were together you intimated that you had a passion which you must by all means suppress. A criminal passion, I know, your heart could never cherish: it must then be love which thus embitters your days.

Excuse me, baron, but what it is you shall never know.

My worthy friend, no longer dissemble. The object of your love is no secret to me. Your fondness has involuntarily transpired, and I am happy that you love my sister SOPHIA.— Here the baron, embraced the colonel, who being filled with confusion, strove to disengage himself.

How, is that, baron, what would you have me tell you?

Tell me whether my sister's hand would be welcome to you.

That must not be thought of: it would be a misfortune to all concerned.

You own it then: but pray how would it be a misfortune?

Yes, you know the object of my tenderness. Lady SOPHIA is the first of her sex who has become

become the mistress of my affections: but I will overcome them. Never shall you be reproached on my account, with having forfeited the just regard due to your ancestors. Far be it from me to stand in the way of lady SOPHIA's claim to superior splendor and distinction. I must insist that you will pledge your honour, never to say a word more about it, or you shall see me no more.

Your sentiments, colonel, are always noble: but God forbid that they should betray you into such a step. Your leaving us, not to mention the anguish it would give me, would exceedingly trouble both SOPHY and my wife. No, no, you shall be my brother.

Your giving me your consent, baron, distresses me more than the impossibility which obstructs my wishes.

My friend has my sister's voluntary and cordial consent, with which my good wishes, and those of my spouse most heartily concur. We have already closely canvassed every circumstance—Would you have me formally request you to marry SOPHY?

Heavens! What a heart does this suppose me to have! So you impute my steadiness to caprice and obstinacy.

To this, I have no reply. Embrace me, and call me brother. Tomorrow, I promise myself, you will be so. SOPHY is yours, and now, instead of considering her as my sister, look on her as a lovely and valuable young woman, who is to constitute the happiness of your life.



your life, and accept with joy a present of the hand of the most tender friend.

SOPHIA mine! and by her own voluntary consent! What superabundant goodness! This, my friend, is giving me every thing, and the only return I can make, is to decline so inestimable a gift.

Decline! How! after an assurance of being beloved! O sister, how cruelly have I injured thine excellent heart!

O baron, forbear such cruel reproaches. As you are so generous, should not I be so too? ought I to be blind to the consequences, and to expose us to public censure, to the contempt of the nobility?

They, my friend, are beneath your notice, where the repose and happiness of your life are at stake.

Well, then, what would you have me do?

With your leave, I'll return home, and open the proposal to my mother. You will come to us, if I send you a line.

The colonel ardently renewed his embraces, after which the baron repaired directly to his mother, with whom he found his lady and sisters, and desiring the eldest to step into her apartment, he followed her thither, and after having given her an account of what had passed in his visit to the colonel, desired her to stay there, while he went to make the proposal to the old lady and CHARLOTTE. On his return, he made a formal proposal in behalf of his friend, at which the old lady reddened not a little, which the baron observing, continued,

continued, Madam, your scruples are not entirely groundless. The rank of ancient nobility should be kept up by suitable alliances: but it should be considered that such virtues and merit as STERNHEIM's have been the foundation of the most noble families. I confess that people are not to blame in believing that great mental qualities may be transmitted to children; and consequently, that a noble father ought to chuse for his son the daughter of a nobleman: I am not therefore for marrying beneath a person's rank: but this is a singular case, such as indeed very seldom occurs. STERNHEIM's personal merit, together with his post of colonel, and his being already raised to the rank of nobility, justify the hopes which I have given him.

Indeed, son, I am not without my objections; for this match, in the eye of the world, will have its dark side; but the gentleman has entirely gained my esteem, and it will be a pleasure to me to concur in his happiness.

And what says my dear spouse?

That such a gentleman as he is affords very just grounds for an exception, and I shall with pleasure call him brother.

Indeed but I shan't, cry'd lady CHARLOTTE.

Why so, my dear?

Because this fine match is to be made at the expence of my honour and happiness.

How so CHARLOTTE?

Who will look out for a match in our house, after the eldest daughter has been so wretchedly degraded?

De-

Degraded ! what by a person of such distinguished merit and virtue ! Degraded by your brother's most intimate friend !

There may possibly be some other very deserving college friend of yours who may seek my hand to prop his rising dignity, and you will always have the same reasons ready to obtain consent.

CHARLOTTE, can such language come from you ?

I am forced to it, as no body else shews the least regard either for me, or for their ancestors.

How, CHARLOTTE, said the young baroness, can't we shew a proper regard for our forefathers, without injuring a most deserving person, and through him wounding an affectionate brother ?

I have heard your exceptions in favour of this mighty man of merit : but families will also have theirs when their sons would chuse to marry me.

CHARLOTTE, he who renounces you on account of the colonel, will be neither worthy of receiving your hand, nor of contracting an alliance with me. You see that I am not without pride for my younger sister, however malapert she may be, though I degrade the eldest, by marrying her to a college acquaintance.

Very malapert, indeed, because she is not willing to be dishonoured and degraded.

Sister, your spight is very ill founded. You need not be apprehensive of any proposals from  
me



me. STERNHEIM is the only person for whom I would open my mouth on such a subject; and a character like his carries with it nobility enough, even were you a princess.

You hear, mother, how I am abused about that upstart fellow.

It is you, CHARLOTTE, who have abused your brother's patience. Can't you propose your objections with more temper?

She was going to reply; but her brother stopped her by adding, Not a word more CHARLOTTE, that expression *upstart fellow* has lost you your brother. You have no longer any concern with my family. Your heart disgraces those ancestors on whom you so highly value yourself. Oh how would the number of the nobility be reduced, were only they allowed to assume that title who could make good their claim to it, by the possession of the distinguished endowments which raised the founder of the family!

My dear child, moderate your resentment; indeed it would not be at all commendable for our daughters to be easily led to close with a marriage beneath them.

O there is no fear of that. Such young women as SOPHY are very thin sown, who love a man purely on account of his sense and his virtues.

Here lady CHARLOTTE retired.

But have not I heard you yourself say, that the English, whom you so much admire, will hardly forgive a daughter who marries below her rank, while in a son it is not so much minded

minded; because a daughter parts with her name, for that of her husband; and thus, of course, degrades herself.

True: but in England, my friend would be a general and universal exception, and the young lady would be honoured for placing her affections on a man of such conspicuous merit.

I see very plainly that this marriage has been preconcerted; but did you ever reflect on the reproaches to which it will expose us, that you will be said to sacrifice your sister to an excess of friendship, and that I shall be esteemed a true stepmother for consenting to it.

Dear madam, let it take its course; our motive precludes every cause of uneasiness, and my sister's manifest happiness, together with my friend's deserts, will silence all unfavourable remarks.

Here the baron left the room; but soon returned with the lady SOPHIA. She instantly kneeled to her mother, who with a tender embrace, raised her, saying, Your brother, my dear, has assured me, that this connection is perfectly agreeable to your own wishes, otherwise I should not have given my consent. Indeed the deficiency in point of family is the only circumstance against the gentleman. However, I pray to God to bless you both.

The baron stepped out again, and returned leading in the colonel, who almost overpowered with the sense of his felicity, immediately made up to the old lady, and respectfully kissing her hand, with a manly gracefulness, said,

Madam,

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 23

Madam, I beg you will be assured that I look on your consent as the kindest, the most condescending act of goodness; and that I shall never prove unworthy of the honour.

To this she kindly answered: It gives me pleasure colonel, that your eminent merit has found a recompence in my family.

He then kissed the hand of his friend's lady, saying, What thanks and acknowledgments are due to her who has so generously exerted her persuasive eloquence in my behalf?

None at all, noble colonel, I am rather proud of contributing to your happiness, and your brotherly affection will be an ample recompence.

He was now going to speak to his friend, when the latter prevented him by shewing him SOPHIA, when kneeling, after a short silence, he said, Most excellent lady, it was impossible for me while I had the least regard for virtue, to observe a mind so richly fraught as yours, and to see your endowments accompanied with every external charm, without a wish—a wish I was endeavouring to suppress, when your brother's unbounded friendship encouraged me to beg your approbation, which you have condescended to grant: for which may Heaven reward your bountiful heart, and never suffer me to depart from that virtue to which I owe your esteem! SOPHIA answered only by a gentle inclination of her head, and reaching out her hand to him as a token to rise.

Here the baron coming up, and taking them both by the hand, led them up to his mother



mother: Madam, said he, nature in me has given you a son, who, I hope, has never been wanting in any proof of filial duty, and now in my friend, Providence gives you a second son, deserving of your esteem and goodness. You have often poured forth prayers for SOPHIA's happiness, and I promise myself that your fondest wishes will be answered in her connection with so sensible and worthy a gentleman. Be so kind as to lay your hands on your children's heads, for I am sure the blessing of a mother will rejoice such hearts as theirs.

They both instantly kneeled, and the old lady affectionately laying her hands as desired, said, Should God grant you all the good which I shall never cease to beg of him, nothing will be wanting to complete your happiness.

Here the baron embraced the colonel as his brother, and thanked his happy sister for her regard for his friend. The colonel stayed and dined with them; but lady CHARLOTTE did not appear at table. Afterwards the marriage was celebrated privately.

Some days after this happy event Mrs. STERNHEIM wrote the following letter to her mother:

*Letter from Mrs. STERNHEIM to her Mother.*

"The foul weather and a trifling indisposition hinder me from paying you my personal respects; but I cannot deny myself the pleasure of conversing with you by letter.

The

The company of my dear spouse, and the consideration of the duties incumbent on me in this new circle of life, compensate for the loss of all other amusements and diversions; but at the same time revive every praise-worthy sentiment and disposition that ever had a place in my heart. Among these is the grateful affection which your goodness, your vigilant and tender care, have for many years demanded from me, and which could not be exceeded by the parental affection of my own mother. Yet I must own that I esteem your so generously consenting to my union with colonel STERNHEIM, as the greatest kindness I ever received at your hands. This has fixed the happiness of my life. My sole wish has been to live agreeably to my personal character and station, and this wish indulgent Providence has gratified, by uniting me to a man who deserves my highest esteem; with a moderate independent fortune, yet sufficient to enable us to live agreeably to our rank, and at the same time to allow us the noble pleasure of relieving the distressed.

Permit me to lay before you a conversation which passed between the gentleman whose name I bear and me, which arose on the following occasion. When you, Madam, my brother, and sister-in-law were gone, I at once became sensible of the vast importance of my new connection. The change of my name instantly represented to me the entire change of my duties. This consideration, which employed all my powers, was, I believe, rendered

the

the more lively, by every external object: a new place of abode; the absence of those with whom I had lived from my childhood; these thoughts with the emotions I felt at your going away, imprinted on my looks a seriousness which my husband instantly perceived, I had seated myself in my closet: he came to look for me with a countenance expressive of a placid joy, he stopp'd in the middle of the room, and after viewing me with a tender solicitude, began:

You seem very pensive, my dear, perhaps I disturb you.

Being unable to speak, I only held out my hand to him, which he kissed, and reaching a chair, sat down by me.

I, said he, have a most sincere respect for your whole family; but shall particularly ever prize the day when all the inclinations of this impressible heart became devoted to my dearest bride. Having honoured me with your esteem, add to it your confidence, and rest assured that you never will be unhappy with the man whom you have so generously preferred. Your family seat is but at a small distance, and in this, a heart so well disposed as yours, will take delight in making both me, your tenants, and servants happy. I know, that for some years, your valuable mother, has entrusted to you the economy of her house, let me beg of you to resume the same employment here, where every thing is at your disposal, Your compliance will exceedingly oblige me, as I propose laying out all my leisure hours in the improve-



improvement of our small estate. This, I do not place entirely in acts of general justice and benevolence; it is farther incumbent on me, to see and examine, whether by altering the distribution of the farms, by having an eye to the good oeconomy of the schools, and by putting tillage and grazing on a better footing, the circumstances of our dependants may not receive very beneficial improvements. I have made myself acquainted with these subjects; for to one like me, born in the middle class of society, the culture of the mind, and the practice of most virtues, are besides being indispensable duties, considered as the sources of prosperity, and the surest means of advancement, and of this truth I shall ever retain the most pleasing sense, as I am indebted to it for the inestimable treasure of your love. Had I been born to the rank and fortune I at present possess, perhaps my ardour for acquiring a name would have been less strong. The greatest blessing that fell to my lot in the past years of my life, was the father which Heaven was pleased to give me; since had I been placed in another situation, never could I have found so wise, so faithful a guide of my youth. By the careful study of my mind, or perhaps in consequence of his knowledge of the human heart in general, he took care to conceal from me the greatest part of his wealth, in order to prevent that remissness with which the only sons of the rich apply to the sciences, and to preserve me from the temptations to which they are exposed: be justly presumed, that having once

learnt to make a good use of my natural dispositions, and acquired talents, I should then make a judicious and wise use of the blessings of fortune. He therefore first endeavoured to make me acquire virtue and knowledge, with a view to render me good and happy, before he put it in my power to enjoy and share with others the pleasures and gratifications which it is in the power of wealth to procure.

The love and practice of virtue, and a taste for the study of the sciences, said he, impart to him who is possessed of them a happiness independent of accident, and the malignity or caprice of men; and at the same time the shining example of his amiable behaviour, the benefit and pleasure of his conversation, render him a very considerable benefactor to society. By such principles, and a suitable education, he qualified me for the happiness of enjoying the friendship of your brother, and I flatter myself, has rendered me in some degree worthy of the possession of your heart. Half my life, I may say, is now elapsed: God be praised, it has not been marked by misfortunes nor by any considerable faults: but the bless'd moment, when the kind, the virtuous, the generous heart of SOPHIA P. was moved to countenance me, is that at which the plan of my remaining happiness receives its date. O my beloved SOPHIA, ever shall this heart be filled with the most affectionate gratitude and respect for you!

Here, ceasing to speak, he kissed me, and desired me to excuse his having talked so much.

I could

I could do no less than assure him that I listened with great pleasure, for my heart corresponded with my words; and I desired him to proceed, as I believed he had still something farther to say.

I should be very loth to tire my dear SOPHIA, but wish that you knew my whole heart; and therefore as you yourself seem to desire me, I will proceed in laying it open before you. It has been my custom, in all the stations through which I have passed, both in the college, in my military service, and in my situation here, to weigh and consider the several duties I am bound to perform in relation to myself, my superiors and others; according to the knowledge and convictions resulting from such reflections, I have divided my time and attention; and at the same time have been prompted by my ambition to perform every part of my duty with alacrity, and as completely as possible. When my task was done, I thought of procuring the relaxations most agreeable to my taste. A similar review I have taken of my present situation, in which four branches of duty occur to me. The first, those towards my amiable wife, are quite easy and delightful; for my whole heart rejoices in them. The second relates to your respectable family, and the rest of the neighbouring nobility, whom, without flattery or meanness, I shall study to convince, that I am not unworthy of the lady SOPHIA P's hand, and of being admitted into the baron's family. As to the persons of that class from which I have been raised, I hope  
C 3 they



they will never have cause to think that I have forgot the origin whence I sprung. In short, there are duties to be observed towards those who are subject to me, and their welfare I shall endeavour to promote, and strive to reconcile their hearts to the state of subjection in which fortune has placed them, by rendering it easy and pleasant, and behave so as to make them chearfully acquiesce in the distinction made by Providence between them and me.

The worthy minister at P. has kindly promised that he will recommend to me a young man well qualified for my parish, with whom I may put in execution what has frequently employed my thoughts. I would have the minister of my parish from a real concern for the ever lasting happiness of his parishioners, and an animated conviction of his own duty, make it his primary care to instil into the minds of the people committed to his care, such a measure of knowledge, as may animate them in the chearful and uniform discharge of their duties towards God, their superiors, their neighbours and themselves. The desire of wealth and sensual gratifications, are as natural to the poor as to the rich; and those desires frequently put them upon illicit practices; I would therefore have them well grounded in religion, and inspired with just ideas of pleasure and happiness. The contemplation of the natural world, I believe, is the best means of reaching their hearts, and the object by which they will be the most easily affected, since every look, every step leads them to make it the subject of their earliest

earliest observations. Thus disposed to acknowledge the hand of their beneficent Creator, I would have the minister endeavour to diffuse a sweet serenity through their souls by frequent comparisons between the circumstances in which they are placed, and the less happy state of other men, who like themselves are the creatures of God, he should then add a view of the moral world, shew the obligations they are under to procure a life of comfort, to do good to others, and to secure their eternal happiness.

I shall also carefully attend to the proper management of the schools, and to the salary and application of the masters; I would introduce into them two catechisms, one concerning the christian duties, with a plain and easy application of its several principles to their manner of life; the other should contain the approved principles of tillage, gardening and grazing, with, the management and improvement of all kinds of forest and timber trees, and the knowledge of all these should be considered as a duty belonging to their profession. Indeed I should be more desirous of seeing my dependants exact in performing all their relative duties, than in making a shew of religion.

I shall employ an ingenious young man whom I met with at P. to assist me in gaining the confidence of my dependants, and a particular knowledge of all their circumstances, that I may the better superintend their concerns as a real father and a guardian, and on

all occasions be enabled to give them good advice and friendly admonitions, as well as to lend them my assistance. And greatly deceived must my heart be in its benevolent hopes, if the careful observance of my duty, and a like zeal in the pastor and those I employ, do not produce the most happy consequences with respect to my dependants.

Here he ceased, desiring me to excuse his long-winded speech, as he termed it, and gently taking me in his arms, my dear SOPHIA, said he, must be quite tired out. When I in the warmth of my overflowing heart, embracing him with tears of joy, cry'd, How, my dear, can I be tired with the enlarged prospect of felicity you are forming around me! The benevolence and virtue of that dear heart, which can form such generous plans of goodness, ensures the happiness of my remaining life. — Blessed indeed is my lot, and O dear honoured mother, God long preserve you a rejoicing witness of it."

A more happy couple never lived than colonel STERNHEIM and his spouse; who were idolized by their dependants; for equity and benevolence kept equal pace within the cheerful confines of their estates. Experiments for the improvement of husbandry, which, after being tryed in the lord's grounds, had been found to answer, were communicated to the tenants, and such who, though poor, expressed a forwardness for putting them in practice, were freely supplied with what was necessary, gratis;



*gratis*; for the colonel was sensible, that without such encouragement, they could not justly be expected to set about any thing, however advantageous it might appear, when it required expence, and the use of a piece of land; but he used to say, What I give them at first, in time yields me interest, and the good folks are best brought to believe by experience, that it is their own welfare we have chiefly in view.

I cannot forbear digressing a little from the capital object of my narrative, to give you, a specimen of the useful and benevolent institutions in which this excellent couple placed a part of their happiness, in a description of the poor-house at S. and this I cannot do better than by an extract of a letter from baron P. to his mother.

How faithfully does my friend make good my promise to you, that our SOPHY would be happy with him! How agreeable is that house! the most noble simplicity united with the most perfect order, gives every thing an air of grandeur. The domestics are all with chearful obsequiousness and diligence busied in their several departments. The happy looks of the master and mistress express the sweet felicity arising from uniform virtue and prudence, and they both join in cordial thanks for the share I have had in promoting their union. What a difference is there between my brother's two small villages, and those much larger and more populous which I lately passed through in my return from court? In the first alacrity and diligence put me in mind of two

thriving bee-hives; and richly does STERNHEIM find himself recompensed for all his trouble in making a more proper division of the farms, each of the vassals being now provided with just as much as he is able to cultivate. But the use to which he has applied count A's seat, which he lately purchased, and which lies exactly between the two villages must naturally be attended with signal benefits.

That structure he has converted into a poor-house for his vassals. On the ground-floor of one side lives a worthy man who was a school master; but being now disabled by age, from the proper discharge of that important office, he acts as superintendant of the behaviour of the people. Above is the apartment for the apothecary who has the care of the sick in the poor-house and both the villages. All the poor work according to their abilities, during the summer in a neighbouring field and kitchen garden belonging to the building, and the produce of both is applied to their own use. In rainy weather, and in winter, the women spin flax, and the men wool, which serve for linen and apparel for themselves, and other necessitous persons. Their diet is clean and wholesome, and every morning and evening divine service is performed by the master of the house. The men and women work in two different rooms, both of which are warmed by one stove. In that of the women, they have their meals, for as they dress the provisions and perform the washing and needle work, their room is the most spacious. Such poor widows, or  
aged

aged single women as have the best character for industry and an exemplary behaviour, are invested with some little authority, as are the poor men of a like character, among their class. The dormitory is in the upper part of the house, and separated into two wards, each consisting of five chambers, and in each of these are two beds, and necessaries of all kinds. On the side towards the garden are the men, and on the other the women, two in each room, that if one be taken ill, the other may assist him, or procure help; and from the middle of the window a deal partition, some feet in length, runs between the bedsteads from the cieling to the floor; so that both may be in some measure, alone, and when one is sick the other may breathe a less morbid air. Different pairs of stairs lead to these two wards, to prevent any disorder.

Under the master of the house are servants employed in husbandry, who being picked men, chosen for the goodness of their morals, and their skill in the practical parts of agriculture, have better wages than any where else.

Poor strangers here meet with relief, they are offered work at so much a day, and are allowed to break off an hour sooner than the usual time, that they may reach the next town before it be dark: but no lazy beggars meet with any relief. The farmers, after every harvest, contribute a quantity of corn to the poor-house, according to their ability, and unconstrained free-will; and thus all the really necessitous are provided for, and the donations not abused. Drunkenness, gaming, lewdness



and idleness are punished, by the offenders being employed in hard labour without the usual allowance, or by fines, which are carefully appropriated to the benefit of the house.

The next month four men and five women are to be received into the house, and my sister goes every day to see that every thing be prepared and made ready for their admission. The subject of the sermon on the Sunday before will be on real charity, and the proper objects of it; afterwards will be read an account of the foundation, and the duties to be punctually observed by all who shall be admitted under its hospitable wings. The minister will then call by their names the parties to be received, up to the altar, and give them a proper exhortation on the right use of the leisure and quiet of their last days; enlarge on their duties towards God and their neighbour, and conclude with a discourse to the like purpose, addressed to the master of the house, the apothecary and the housekeeper. All my family intend to be present at this ceremony, at least I will not fail to be there.

But to return, the nobility in the neighbourhood entertained such an esteem for colonel STERNHEIM as to be solicitous for his taking into his family, their sons, on their return from their travels, in order that they might acquire that experimental knowledge of agriculture which it becomes a nobleman to be acquainted with. Among these was the young count LOBAU, who, by being at Col. STERN-

HEIM'S

HEIM's, contracted an intimacy with lady CHARLOTTE, and they were soon married.

Colonel STERNHEIM readily condescended to give those young noblemen just ideas of the manner of governing their vassals, and their dependants, from the humane consideration, that he might, perhaps, instil into them the sympathy due to the indigent, whose toilsome and penurious life is often still more embittered by the haughtiness and severity of the great. Being persuaded that example goes farther than the most excellent precepts, he used to take his pupils every where abroad with him, conversing with them as opportunity offered. He explained to them the reasons of his conduct, and being acquainted with the income and nature of their respective estates, he added short personal applications. They were spectators of his several employments, and shared in his relaxations. From these last, he took occasion earnestly to recommend their forbearing such as hurt their poor vassals, and of these, one of the most detrimental, he observed, was hunting. This he allowed to be a manly and becoming exercise; but maintained that every humane and benevolent nobleman, would take care that his dependants should not be sufferers by his diversions. The love of reading was one of the dispositions he endeavoured to cultivate, and history, in particular, gave him an opportunity of discoursing on the moral world, its revolutions and evils; of expatiating on the duties of a court and military life, and of habituating their minds

minds to reflection and deliberation. The history of the moral world, he used to say, qualifies us for conversation; to bear with other men; to make them better, and at the same time, to remain tranquil and easy in our station: but an attentive survey of the physical world raises us to the great Author of our being; it exhibits to us on the one hand, our own debility and impotence; and on the other, his wisdom and his goodness invite us to contemplate him with minds filled with a supreme love and reverence; besides, such contemplations will carry us placidly through the many cares and vexations, which in the moral world, frequently fall thicker on the great and opulent, than on the cottage of the peasant, whose cares seldom extend beyond his necessary subsistence.

Thus did he interweave instruction and exhortation with example; while in his house was seen the exalted happiness of a marriage between a worthy man and a virtuous woman. Love and esteem ran through every part of their behaviour, and the respectful domestics were ready to lay down their lives for their dear master and mistress.

It was also no small satisfaction to STERNHEIM that all these young noblemen acknowledged his kindness and abilities, and after they left him, were on all occasions, his most devoted friends.

His spouse at length brought him a daughter, a very fine and hopeful child, who soon became his sole consolation; and the only joy he knew on earth, death having dissolved the union which



which rendered him the most happy of mankind. Young SOPHIA was nine years of age when she had the misfortune to lose the most tender mother. The colonel poured his grief into the bosom of his friend; but he had soon other tears to shed. Baron P. had a fall from his horse, which reduced him to a bad state of health, and a few months after deprived him of life. He died without issue. In his will he duly remember'd his excellent spouse; but according to the law of the country, appointed his younger sister, the countess of LOBAU, and the young SOPHIA STERNHEIM, as daughter to his eldest sister, his chief heiress, which the count and countess considered as a wrong done to them. The will however remained good.

The old baroness of P. who was extremely afflicted at her son's untimely death, now took up her residence with colonel STERNHEIM, and superintended the education of her little grand daughter. That gentleman by every mark of a respectful affection, and by the example of his own resignation, alleviated the weight of her sorrows. Meanwhile the worthy parson and his daughters were almost the only company in which she found any consolation. SOPHIA received an excellent education; one of the pastor's daughters who was nearly of the same age, was placed with her to excite her emulation, as well as to prevent her contracting a melancholy disposition, which she probably would have done, had she no other company but that of her father and grandmother; for both used frequently

quently to lament their loss, and the colonel would lead his daughter, now in her twelfth year, up to a picture of her mother, and talk with such tenderness of her virtue and goodness of heart, that she once fell on her knees dissolved in tears, and ardently wished to die, that she might be with her dear mother. This excessive sensibility made the colonel apprehend that her tender mind would imbibe too strong a propensity to melancholy, and that the extreme delicacy of her frame would increase to such a degree as to render her incapable of struggling with grief and distress: he therefore strove to overcome himself, and shew his daughter, how those misfortunes are to be borne, which generally give the deepest wounds to the best persons, and the young lady discovering an extraordinary understanding, he cultivated it with history, several parts of philosophy, and the languages, of which the English was that in which she made the greatest proficiency, and became almost as much mistress of it, as of her native language. She perfected herself in singing and in touching the lute. Of dancing she knew as much as became a lady. Indeed she rather imparted a grace and ornament to that art, than derived any from it; for every body agreed that there was in all the young lady's motions something inexpressibly charming, to which no degree of art could attain.

Besides these daily employments, she, with singular dispatch and facility, made herself mistress of all kinds of needlework, and the use of her pen, so that when she was scarce sixteen

teen, she was entrusted with the whole management of the family, and her mother's diaries and books of account were put into her hands for her instruction. A natural love of order, and of an active life, strengthened by an enthusiastic veneration for the memory of her mother, whose resemblance she was ambitious of obtaining, made her succeed as much in this as in the rest. When any one mentioned the variety of her knowledge and attainments, she would modestly answer, I owe it to natural genius, good examples, and kind instructions; and with such a happy concurrence of circumstances, who could do otherwise. She was fond of whatever was said to be English, and her only wish was that her father would visit that island and give her an opportunity of seeing her grandmother's relations.

Thus was this young lady shooting up in the bloom of youth, when being a little turn'd of nineteen, a lingering illness deprived her of her excellent father, who with a fond anxiety earnestly recommended her to the care of count LOBAU, and the worthy pastor of Sternheim as her guardians. To the latter he, a few weeks before his death, wrote the following letter.

*Col. STERNHEIM to the Minister of —.*

"Soon shall I see her who was the dearest part of myself. My house and every thing concerning my dear SOPHIA's fortune are settled. This was both the last and the least important



portant office that remain'd for me to do for her. As to the first and most sacred duty of a father, that of giving her a good education, adapted to draw down upon her the blessings of heaven, if I may believe the testimony of my heart, I have not neglected it. Thus I do not fear that with a soul like hers, born with the love of virtue, she will ever be the cause of uneasiness to you my valuable friend, who will now succeed me as her father. Love, in particular, notwithstanding that extreme tenderness of disposition she has inherited from her excellent mother, will have little influence over her, unless she finds a person whose virtue corresponds with her refin'd ideas. Guard her, my dear friend, guard her, I conjure you, from being seduced by a false virtue. She searches with such eagerness to discover the good qualities of others, and glides with such candour and indulgence over their defects, that in this respect I have reason to tremble for her. Never, no never, will any humane mind be made unhappy by her; for I know that to promote the welfare of another deserving person, she would be ready to sacrifice her own; and that she would not give another a transient affliction to secure the happiness of her whole life. But alas! her tender and delicate feelings put her too much in the power of others. I have hitherto conceal'd my apprehensions from the countess of LOBAU's temper, and the thoughts of SOPHIA being with her make me tremble. The mildness and goodness that appear in that woman are not in her heart, and the engaging  
wit,

wit, and soothing voice, she has learnt at court, are only a deceitful varnish that covers the vices of her soul. Yet I never communicated what I thought of her to my daughter; this I esteemed unnecessary while I lived. But when the baroness P. shall sink under the weight of age and affliction, do you take SOPHIA under your care. Providence will soften the trouble of your office, and I hope God will make it easy to you, by his granting the last supplications of a dying father, who, does not desire for his daughter riches and grandeur; but prays that wisdom and virtue may be her portion. Thus I resign her to the divine goodness, and commit her to the hands of a faithful friend. Yet more easily can I disengage myself from all my earthly concerns, than from the thoughts of my daughter. Here I recollect a conversation we had on the force of the impressions we receive in our youth: I actually feel a part of what I then advanced, and that with all the warmth which the circumstances I am in ought to add to that remembrance. My worthy father endeavoured particularly to impress upon my mind two things, the certainty of a retribution, even in this life, and the advantage we ourselves receive from the good example we set to others. His arguments on these heads were so strong and sublime, and his expressions so pathetic and affectionate, that they could not fail of being deeply impressed on so tender a soul as mine. How often did he say to me, that the uneasiness or joy I gave him, would be either punished or rewarded by my children!

Praised

Praised be the bounteous giver of all grace, that my behaviour towards my worthy father obtained for me the blessing of so dutiful and virtuous a child; and this gladdens the last scenes of my life with the transporting remembrance, that I also crowned my father's last days with the most complete satisfaction which a truly paternal heart can feel. "Never, said he, on his death bed, have you given me uneasiness by your evil inclinations, or your disobedience to me. No, your love of virtue; your constant application to useful and praiseworthy objects, have rendered you my comfort, for which may God bless you, and recompence you by your feeling in your turn the sweet satisfaction which the sight of you now imparts to a dying father; from the assurance, that in my son I leave a worthy member of society." That sweet satisfaction, my dear friend, I now feel in myself, as I can bear the like testimony of my daughter. She has also been to me the source of another kind of satisfaction mingled with sorrow, since in presenting before me the lively image of her mother, she has revived the remembrance of my happiness, and the grief of such a heartfelt loss. How often has this sent me away from the table, or from company, especially in the two last years, when being grown up to her mother's stature, and, at my desire, wearing her cloaths, all her mother shone out in her! and I found again in the sound of her voice, the manners, the amiable gaiety, and all the goodness of heart of my beloved wife! God grant



grant that this example of filial piety may be continued from her to her latest posterity.

Thus affectionately did he lay open his heart to his worthy friend. It is with keen emotions that I recollect the last hours of that worthy man, and his various discourses preceding his death. The grief of his dear SOPHIA was too violent to admit of the consolation of tears. She kneeled by his bed; her countenance and attitude expressing the deepest sorrow: her father's eyes were fix'd on her; with one of his hands in hers, and now and then a sigh escaped him, ending in, O my dear SOPHIA! One of the young lady's arms extended in silence towards heaven, while all the lineaments of her countenance express'd her love, her piety, her distress. Oh this scene of solemn grief, of virtue, of resignation, rent all our hearts!

SOPHIA, said he, we cannot complain, sixty years is not too hasty a separation. Death to me, so far from being an evil, will unite my spirit to its gracious Creator, and my heart to thine excellent mother. Congratulate me on such felicity, though it shorten the pleasure thy father's longer life might have given thee.

Overcoming in some degree her dejection, she herself attended her father with all possible care and composure. He observed her struggles to triumph over nature, and begg'd her to give him the consolation of seeing, in his last moments, the fruit of his endeavours, to enable her to possess herself at such a trying season. She fully answered his wishes, O best of father's! said she, after directing me how to live; you now

now teach me how to die! May heaven appoint you my guardian angel, and to be a witness of all my thoughts and actions. I will deserve your care.

When he had uttered his last sigh, the house exhibited the most affecting scene. It was crowded with weeping dependants; in his chamber the domestics accompanying their tears with fervent supplications: his daughter by his bedside, kissing his cold hands, unable to speak, sometimes kneeling, then rising with all the gestures of oppressive grief.—O my friend! how does the remembrance of that day penetrate my heart! How pregnant with the most important instructions is the death bed of a good man, to a sensible mind!

My father stood a silent spectator; he was himself too much affected to have the free use of his speech. At length, taking the distressed young lady by the hand, God grant, said he, that you may inherit the virtues of your worthy father, who is now gone to receive his reward! May he plant them in these afflicted hearts, (here he pointed to us) and by a dutiful remembrance of your respectable master, may you be induced to walk in his steps.

The old lady was likewise there, and this circumstance my father made use of to get SOPHIA out of the room, by desiring her to attend her grandmother, who was retiring to some other place to seek for comfort. When the young lady began to move we all made way. She view'd us with a look of tenderness, tears now trickling down her lovely cheeks.

The

The family crowding about her kiss'd her hands and even her cloaths; not by way of recommending themselves to the heiress; but as marks of respect for the only surviving remains of the best of masters.

The funeral was conducted by my father and the steward, and never had such a burial been seen. Col. STERNHEIM had directed that it should be at night, and with as little shew as possible, in order to save his SOPHY's seeing his body deposited in the mansions of the dead. But the church was crowded with people, and every one in mourning, as it was illuminated suitably to the occasion. All express'd their eagerness to see once more their dear master and benefactor. The old, the young, all melted into tears, and blessed him, pouring forth their ardent prayers, that God would reward the daughter, for her father's great goodness to them.

The concern at Sternheim was far from being a transient ceremony, concluding with the funeral. SOPHIA's perseverance in her grief even gave my father some uneasiness, particularly as the old lady, overcome by this last affliction, grew daily more weak and infirm. Her affectionate grand-daughter waited on her with a tenderness which she thus acknowledg'd. O SOPHY! you have all your mother's sympathy and goodness, with the strong sense of your father. A happier creature, surely does not exist on earth, as in you are united the endowments which so advantageously distinguish'd  
your



your dear parents. Now left to yourself, you enter on your independency by your assiduous attendance on your infirm grandmother, and believe me, child, to help and cherish age with such tenderness, is a virtue not inferior to the most liberal acts of charity.

The count and countess of LOBAU paying them a visit, she earnestly recommended the orphan to them. They both seemed to behave with much courtesy and even tenderness towards the young lady, and were desirous of taking her home with them; but she entreated her grandmother, to allow her to stay the year of mourning with her.

In this interval began that intimate friendship which she afterwards steadily preserved for my sister EMILIA. With her she used frequently to visit the tomb of her parents. These bones, these bones, said she, are now all my kindred. Lady LOBAU is no relation of mine; she has no sentiments that I can approve. Our way of thinking is entirely different, and I only regard her as my uncle's sister.

About this time the steward of the estate of Sternheim, who is a very worthy man, married my eldest sister; and his brother, a clergyman, being there on a visit, took a fancy to EMILIA, and obtained both her's and my father's consent. This marriage, which separated the two friends, gave rise to a correspondence that will afford me an opportunity of frequently making her speak for herself.

But

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 49

But I must first draw you my young lady's picture, in which you are not to expect a perfect beauty. In stature she was somewhat above the middle size, and exceeding well shap'd: her face oval, and full of expression: she had beautiful hazle eyes, beaming both vivacity and goodness: a fine mouth, and within it a very beautiful set of teeth. Her forehead high, but rather too large for a perfect beauty. In all her features there was something amiable, and in all her deportment such dignity, that wherever she appeared she attracted all eyes. Every sort of dress became her, and I have heard my Lord SEYMOUR say, that in every plait of her robe resided some particular grace. In her choice of silks she constantly preferred those that made the least shew, and yet she was always distinguished, however splendid was the company in which she appeared. Nothing could equal the beauty of her hair, which was of a chesnut colour, and of a great length. The sound of her voice had an engaging sweetness; and her expressions were well chosen, without being affected. In a word, it was her character and mind that gave charms to her person, and attracted the heart.

Such was Lady SOPHIA, when her aunt carried her to the court of D. Among the preparations for this journey, which my father concurred in persuading her to take, I cannot omit the following. She had enamelled pictures of her father and mother set in bracelets, which she constantly wore: she desired to have them unmounted, and accordingly gave orders

to a jeweller. The portraits were brought back encompassed with brilliants; and two days before her departure, she went, accompanied by my sister EMILIA, to the tomb of her parents, and bidding a solemn farewell to their dear remains, renew'd her vows of faithfully copying their virtues: she then took off her bracelets, which were contrived in such a manner, that a little vacant space was left under the pictures, that was discovered by means of a spring. When she had opened them, she filled this space with earth taken from the tomb, and while she was thus employed the tears trickled down her cheeks. My dear lady, said EMILIA, what are you about? What is the meaning of your putting up that earth? Dearest EMILIA, answer'd she, the wisest and the best persons esteem it a virtue to reverence the dust of the virtuous. This earth, which covers the sacred remains of my parents, is dearer to me than the whole world, and, as I am going from home, will be the most precious thing I can take with me.

My sister, troubled at this, told us she apprehended that some grievous affliction was impending, and that her mind had secret forebodings, that when the dear young lady was gone, she should never see her more. My father, however, endeavoured to remove our fears, and yet he himself was soon seized with them. He was informed that the dear lady had visited every house in the villages that belonged to her, and had conversed most affectionately with all the people, distributing presents



sents among them, and exhorting them to be industrious and honest; that she had encreas'd the allowance for the widows, the orphans, the aged, and the sick: was particularly earnest in her conversation with the school-master; augmented his salary, and instituted prizes for the encouragement of the children: that she made my brother-in-law, the steward, a present of a gold snuff-box, and my sister of a ring, to keep for her sake, recommending to the former equity and tenderness towards her dependants. This account drew tears from every eye; but my father alleviated our grief, by saying, It is the way of all people of a melancholy cast, to throw a kind of solemnity over their actions. Yet it gave him much satisfaction, that she entered on the great world with such strong impressions of true goodness and humanity, as not a few of those sensations would be there moderated, by an imperceptible mixture of gaiety and spirit, and by her becoming better acquainted with the human heart, her enthusiasm would gradually subside, and be kept within due limits.

My sister EMILIA had also her friend's picture, and a most elegant casket, the contents of which amounted to a little fortune. A servant she left behind, because he was married, and Count LOBAU had sent her word that his people should wait on her.

A few days after came the count, her uncle, to fetch her away, and I, at her earnest desire, was permitted to accompany her. Her taking leave of my father was very affecting: you

who knew him, must be sensible that he at the same time inspired love and esteem. We first went to the Lobau estate, and from thence, along with the countess, to D. and here begins the fatal period in which you will see this most amiable young lady entangled in embarrassments and distresses which at once destroyed the beautiful plan she had formed of a happy life, and, by the severe trials they drew on her virtue, render her history a treasure of instruction to our sex.

It will now, I think, be the best way for me, instead of continuing the narrative, to lay before you a series of letters written by my beloved lady, from which you will form a better idea of her genius and temper, and of every thing remarkable that happened to her during her residence at D. than by any extracts I could make from them. To these I shall join the copies of some letters which will serve to elucidate her's, and to complete these memoirs: for all these, by a train of circumstances, at length fell into my hands.

L-E-T.

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 53

LETTER I.

*Lady SOPHIA STERNHEIM to EMILIA.*

*My dear Friend,*

I Have now been here four days, and this seems to me a kind of new world. The rattle of carriages and the bustle of the people is, indeed, little more than I expected, yet to an ear like mine, accusom'd to the stillness of the country, it was at first very irksome; but a much more disagreeable circumstance, was my aunt's sending for the court hair-dresser, to put mine in the top of the mode. She was so complaisant as to come with him into my chamber, where, loosening my hair, she said, Here's a head on which you may do honour to your skill, and pray shew it to the utmost; but be exceeding careful that these beautiful locks are not injur'd by your hot irons.

This little flattery in my aunt did not displease me; but the man's high-flown praises nettled me, and my pride made me think it would better become him to mind what he was set about, and keep his admiration to himself. But still more insupportable were the mantua-maker and the milliner. ROSINA can tell you all their idle tattle, and some remarks, a little severe, that escaped me. The vanity of the ladies of this town, thought I, must surely have very little delicacy, and be sharp set, when they can encourage these people to bring



bring it food, which to me appears so coarse and insipid. But of what value are the praises dictated by interest? With the disdain which I feel for general applause, it gives me no pleasure to be remarked for any particular advantage.

This afternoon I have seen some gentlemen and ladies whom my aunt had informed of her arrival, excusing her not waiting on them on account of her being extremely fatigued with her journey; when, in reality, the sole cause was the cloaths being not yet ready, in which I was to make my appearance. You know, my dearest EMILIA, that my father was fond of seeing me in my mother's cloaths, and I was no less fond of wearing them: but here they are all quite out of fashion, and, as it was my aunt's pleasure that they should be laid by, I submitted to her will. The only gown I am allowed to wear is the white tabby, which was made for me at the conclusion of our mourning. Ah! my dear EMILIA! don't take this term in the literal sense: for though I have laid aside the external trappings of sorrow, it still retains its former residence in the secret recesses of my heart, and appears to have made an alliance with my secret monitor, I mean my conscience: for amidst the multitude of silks and trinkets lately brought me (this for the approaching gala, that for the next ball, another for the assembly) the motion of my hands present to my sight the picture of my mother, so plainly dressed, in the bracelet, and that fixing my attention while I am preparing  
to

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 55

to adorn my person, I could not forbear thinking, What a different figure from this shall I shortly make? But God forbid this difference should ever extend beyond my dress, which I consider as a sacrifice which the best and most sensible people cannot sometimes well avoid offering, to custom, to circumstances, and to their connexion with others. This thought seemed to me a lesson given me by my conscience and the remembrance of my parents.— So much before my making my appearance: however, as you, my tender friend, are to serve me instead of a parent, and have desired that I would give you an account, as occasions offer, of every thing in which I am interested, and of the ideas which various objects excite in my mind, I am resolved to obey you. I shall say very little of others, any farther than I myself am concerned; besides, what I observe in them is not quite strange to me, as I know the manners of the great, from the pictures of them which my grand-mother and my father often sketched out for me.

I now entered my aunt's room, where the company were assembled. I had on a white sack with blue Italian flowers. My head genteely dressed in the tip of the fashion. How it was with my air and complexion I know not, but I suppose I might look a little pale; for soon after the countess had introduced me as her favourite niece, a young gentleman, naturally no bad figure, came up with an indecent pertness, and inclining towards my aunt, with his face toward me, in an attitude of fear,

cried, My dear countess, is this really your ladyship's niece?—Do you doubt it, sir?—Why, from her first appearance, dress, and fairy motions, I really took the lady for some lovely spirit.—Poor F. ! said a lady, and, very likely, you are afraid of spirits.

The ugly ones, answered he, I mortally hate and abhor ; but, with a spirit like this, I could trust myself alone for hours.

Thus, with this bright conceit, you would bring upon my house the disgrace of being haunted !

I wish it were, to keep all other gentlemen at a distance ; but then I should be for conjuring away the pretty spirit.

Well said, Count F. ! and all the room ring with Bravo ! Bravo !—Now niece, continued my aunt, are you for being conjured away ?

I know very little of the world of spirits, answer'd I ; but am apt to think that every ghost requires a particular kind of conjuration, and the fright which my appearance gave the count, makes me think myself under the protection of a more powerful spirit than that which taught him his conjuration.

Admirable ! excellent ! Go on Count F. call'd out Colonel SCH.

I have, however, answered the count, found out more than any of you ; for though the lady is not a mere spirit, I perceive she has an infinite deal of spirit.

Oh ! that you might have guess'd, and it was probably your penetration was the cause of  
your



your being seized with such a panic, said Miss C. maid of honour to the Princess W. who till then had not opened her mouth.

You are always severe upon me, Miss C. for by that you mean to say, that an inferior spirit began to be afraid of a superior.

There is more truth in all this raillery, thought I, than they imagine. I am a kind of apparition not only in this house, but in this town and at court. Spiritual beings are supposed to come into the world with a knowledge of mankind; they are neither astonished at what they see, nor at what they hear; but, like me, frequently compare this world with that from whence they came, and deplore the levity with which people think of a future state: men see them, they being clothed with the same form; but they belong to a different species of beings.

Miss C. had then a pretty long conversation with me, at the close of which she expressed her high esteem, and very obligingly wished to cultivate an acquaintance with me. She is very amiable, and a little taller than I, with something graceful in her walk and the motion of her head. Her face is rather long, but every feature is delicately form'd. She has fair hair, and a most engaging sweetness of countenance: only I thought her beautiful eyes bestowed their looks too much on those of the men. She has a fine understanding, and all her expressions speak the goodness of her heart. In short, of all the persons I saw in that company, she pleased me most, and I in-

send to close with her kind proposal of cultivating an acquaintance.

At length entered the Countess of F. whom my aunt had desired me to treat with great respect, as her lord could be of great service to my uncle in a law suit then depending. I accordingly did so; yet that the niece was by her complaisance to the minister's spouse, to forward the uncle's claims, was what I did not relish. Were I in his stead, I should not employ either my own or the minister's wife; but it being men's business, should treat of it only with men. The minister, who is governed by his wife, I do not much like; but this is here the usual custom; hence the one makes no complaint, and the other forbears all airs of superiority.

Miss C. and Lady F. staid to supper. The conversation was very lively, but so vague and confused that I could make neither head nor tail of it. Lady F. was very liberal of her compliments to me on whatever I said or did; but if she meant by this means to please me, she was grievously out in her reckoning; for my heart will never be inclined to love her, and I do not look on myself as under the same obligation of duty to get the better of any dislike to her, as I am with respect to my aunt, though we now and then have some little altercations. But for Miss C. I shall ever retain a cordial love. She was with me in my apartment, and we conversed together as freely as if we had been old acquaintance: she said a great deal of her

her princess, and how fond she would be of me, I being quite to her taste. Having, by my aunt's desire, play'd some tunes on my lute, accompanied with my voice, she gave me still stronger assurances of the princess's favour, and I came off with general applause. I believe that what renders the voice and accent of the courtiers pleasing, is the attention they pay to the self-love of others.

My aunt was pleased to say, that she lik'd me very much, for she had been under terrible apprehensions of my appearing a strange sort of a creature, and at least extremely rustic. I had also Lady F's praises, though not without the exception of my being something cold and reserv'd; and so I was, for I cannot prostitute the assurances of my friendship and esteem, and never can I give them when I do not feel them. No, my dear EMILIA, I am above deceit, and my heart has not an equal sensibility for all. But don't think that I form a disadvantageous opinion of all who think and act contrary to my sentiments. I assure you I endeavour to do justice to every one, and never put the worst construction on any thing. I say to myself, a wrong education that produces false ideas, examples which confirm them, and the pretended obligation of living as others do, have warp'd these people from their genuine character. I consider them as persons labouring under a family distemper. I will behave kindly to them, but not with familiarity and confidence, lest I become infected with their disease.

Pray,



Pray, my dear friend, for my steady continuance in right principles, and continue to love me. Heaven's choicest blessings on our dear father! How will he be able to bear his being separated from so fond a child as his EMILIA? but how auspiciously do you enter the marriage state, crowned with the cordial blessing of so pious a parent! With my respects to the worthy man you have chosen, and who possesses a valuable treasure in the heart of my EMILIA, I am, &c.

---

## LETTER II.

*From Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

I Am pleased, my dear EMILIA, that this letter will likewise come to your hands, in your father's house, as I am persuaded it will shew a visible confusion in my ideas; but your father will be able to point out the best means of rectifying them. I have been presented to the Princess of W. and all the nobility, and am now personally acquainted with the court and am known to the great.

I have already told you, that I had some knowledge of them from the representations of others, and nothing that I first saw appeared strange; but imagine a person capable of observation and fond of speculation, to whom a capital picture, finely executed, has long been known;

known; she has frequently viewed it and consider'd the plan, the ordonance, the blending of the colours, and nothing has escaped her curious eye: when lo! this picture with all its parts is set in motion by a foreign power: this naturally fills the observer with amazement, and excites in her mind a variety of emotions. This amazed person am I. It is neither the objects nor the colours that strike me, but the motion so foreign to it.

Shall I tell you how I was received? Exceeding well every where; for on such occasions the court has a general round of phrases in which the most shallow are as fluent as the most sensible. The princess, who is near fifty, has a great share of wit, and an air of goodness in her expressions and behaviour, which from its indiscriminate condescension seemed to me habitual, and to have taken its rise at a time when she might think it of importance to gain the affections of all sorts of people. This I consider as the *only* motive capable of producing this effect; for it is little worthy of a soul truly noble, to shew an equal benevolence to all without distinction of merit. She talked with me a long while, and said much in praise of my dear father, whom she had known when a captain, and afterwards on his being raised to the rank of colonel. She was pleased to say, I was the worthy daughter of an excellent man, and that she would often send for me. You can't but think, my dear

EMILIA, that I love and honour this princess

the

the more on account of her regard for my father's memory.

I shall here draw no more characters, there being such a general resemblance in most of them, at least, when they shew themselves in the princess's withdrawing room, and in common visits.

Yesterday I was interrupted in my writing by being informed that there was to be an assembly at the princess's, where I was expected, and was therefore under the necessity of idling away at the toilette, an interval which I had promised myself I should consecrate to friendship. Believe me, honest ROSINA is no more fit to be a modish chambermaid, than I to support the character of a lady of high rank; for I cannot contract the noble habit of consuming a great part of my life at my toilette, nor meditate long together on the choice of my dress. My aunt, to remedy our defects, sends me every day one of her women, besides the hair dresser: all their preparations, and the importance they give to their office, put my patience to a very disagreeable trial; however, for that time I was very well satisfied when all was over, because I was really well dressed.

This is a satisfaction which you never yet perceived in me, and to save you the trouble of surmises and conjectures, I will honestly let you into the cause. I was pleased with the elegance of my dress, because I was to be seen by two English noblemen, whose approbation I was very desirous of obtaining. One was



was my Lord G. the English envoy, and the other Lord SEYMOUR, his nephew, who under his uncle's conduct was qualifying himself for that branch of public business, and gaining a knowledge of the courts of Germany. The envoy by his figure, his noble and lively countenance, and a certain dignity accompanied with politeness, did honour to his character.

I was in company with the young Lord SEYMOUR above half an hour. Miss C. who has a very high esteem for him, as he also has for her, introduced him to me, by observing that I was her new friend from whom she never would be separated while at her own disposal. My lord answered her with a bow; but his whole demeanor so plainly expressed his sentiments, that both his approbation of every thing Miss C. said, and his favourable opinion of her friend were plainly visible. Were I obliged to draw a picture that should represent the happy union between an elevated soul, a penetrating mind, and a heart in which sweet humanity resides, I would form it entirely of the person and features of Lord SEYMOUR, and I fancy that all who ever had any just idea of those three qualities, might perceive them plainly expressed in his form, look and demeanor. I shall not expatiate on the sweetness and charms of his voice, of his noble appearance, and of the tincture of melancholy which softens the vivacity of his fine eyes; but what distinguishes him from multitudes of men I have seen in the few weeks I have been here, is, if I express myself right, the sentimental

mental look of modest virtue which gives no offence.

Miss C. wishing that I might never leave her, made him ask whether I was not to stay at D. to which I answered, I believed not, as I stay'd only for my aunt the Countess of R's return, who was gone on a tour to Italy with her husband; and then I should go with them to their seat.

I can't conceive, said he, how your vivacity can reconcile itself to the simplicity and uniformity of a country life.

And I can scarce think Lord SEYMOUR really believes that a sprightly, and consequently an active disposition, is in danger of wanting entertainment in the country.

I don't mean, miss, a total want, but the disagreeableness and lassitude of seeing our thoughts and observations perpetually confined to one kind of objects.

I own, my lord, that since my being here in town, I have found, on comparing both kinds of life, that in the country employments and diversions are as various as those I see here; with this only difference, that amidst the amusements and pastimes of the country, the heart is perfectly easy and at rest, which I feel little of here, and such rest I account very valuable.

So do I; and addressing himself to Miss C. I am inclin'd to think from your esteemed friend's manner of expressing herself, that she would maintain that rest though she made thousands uneasy.

As

As his eyes were not on me while he said so, and Miss C. only smiled, I likewise was silent; for this politeness of his gave me some confusion, which I would not willingly have betray'd, and therefore, instead of holding him in talk any longer, left her the preference, as due to her former acquaintance; which I might the better do, as he had with great earnestness address'd himself to her.

Here, methinks, you say, *Why former acquaintance?* Was you then his acquaintance, though this first time of seeing him was but about half an hour?

Yes, dear EMILIA, he was my acquaintance before I saw him; for Miss C. had given me a particular account of his excellent character, before his return from an excursion, in which he had accompanied his uncle, during the absence of the prince, and all the good things said of him were no more than was expressed in his countenance. Besides, EMILIA, I was struck with the melancholy pensiveness in which he stood leaning against the side of the window, in which we were both sitting, and continued our chat. Making Miss C. observe her friend's thoughtful attitude, I softly ask'd her if he was often so? She told me he was.

She then asked me many questions about the kind of pastimes which it was possible for me to procure in the country, and I briefly, but with a full heart, gave her an account of the happy time of my education in my father's house, and protested that her friendship was all the



the satisfaction I had hitherto known at D. She kindly squeezed my hand, and said, she had no less pleasure in mine. I proceeded by saying, I could not bear the word *pastime*, as, during my whole life, time had never hung heavy on my hands, that is, whisper'd I, when in the country. In my opinion, a desire of what is call'd killing time shews an ill turn of mind; for life is so short, and we have so many subjects of observation in order to know this place of our abode; so much to learn, if we would make a right use of our intellectual powers, and are capable of doing so much good, that it hurts me to hear people talk so lightly of getting rid of what is of such concern. How lamentably people study to deceive themselves!

Your seriousness, my dear, amazes me; yet what you say gives me pleasure. You are, as the princess said, a most extraordinary person.

I know not how it was with me, EMILIA. I perceived that this way of thinking did not pass current here; but that I could not help. I was seized with inquietude, with a desire of being at a great distance; I longed to be alone, and could even have shed tears, without being able to assign any particular cause.

Here my Lord G. came up to his nephew, and taking him by the arm, said, SEYMOUR, you are like a child sleeping securely on a river's brink. Look about you! pointing to us; it is very happy for you that I awak'd you. Very right, uncle; I was too much absorb'd in the ravishing harmony I heard, to dream of danger.

While

While he said this, his eyes return'd to me with the most lively expression of fondness; so that casting down mine, I turn'd away my head. On which my lord said in English, SEYMOUR, have a care! it is not for nothing that these beautiful nets are spread abroad so alluringly. At the same time I perceived his hand pointing to my hair, which made me blush as red as scarlet; for I was piqued at being charged with coquetry: but, to save both him and myself from more pain, I said to him, My lord, I understand something of English. This struck him a little; he however commended my candour, and SEYMOUR chang'd colour, yet smiled, and immediately turning to Miss C. said,

Won't you learn English too? Of whom? she replied.

Of me, my dear miss, and of this young lady: my uncle also won't be against giving you some instructions, and you'll soon learn.

Never so well as from this dear friend of mine, to whom indeed it is natural, for she is half an English woman.

How so? says my Lord G. turning to me.

My grandmother was named WATSON, and married baron P. when he was envoy from this court to that of England.

Miss C. desired him to speak English. He did; and my answers were such that he particularly commended my pronunciation, and told Miss C. that I spoke it very well, and she could not do better than learn it from me. When he went away, my Lord SEYMOUR persuaded

suaded Miss C. to take the trouble of learning to read English, which she promised, adding, that she should not fail being with me every day that did not require her attendance at court. Then there's an end of my service, said he with some concern.

You shall hear, once a week, how I go on.

To this he answered with a bow.

The princess soon after ordered me to be called, and desired me to go with her into her closet. Here, my dear, said she, when we were there, is my lute; every body is at cards, and do you give me, now we are alone, a specimen of your voice and skill. She was not to be refused, and I obey'd, by playing the first tune that came to hand. After which she actually embrac'd me, saying, You are a very amiable young lady indeed, to have made yourself mistress of so many accomplishments in the country, which ladies brought up at court are utterly ignorant of. She then, in a most affable manner, led me by the hand into the drawing-room, where she kept me till the assembly broke up, and talk'd to me of a thousand different things. My Lord SEYMOUR's eyes were often fix'd on me (be sure, EMILIA, you read this to my dear guardian) and the notice he took of me gave me pleasure: but I was also gazed at by the whole company, which greatly disgusted me; for I imagined that their looks expressed something little agreeable to my principles.

To-day we paid a visit to the Countess of F. to whom I was desired to shew great respect.

It



It is pretty evident that her spouse is a favourite of the prince, for the marks of favour conferred on them was a principal subject of her discourse. She then mentioned the high regard her husband had entertained for a gentleman, for whom too much could not be done. This was followed by very high encomiums on the prince, the comeliness of his person, his many accomplishments, his refined taste in every thing, particularly in his entertainments, his munificence, his liberality, virtues worthy of a sovereign. This lady, thought I, has sufficient cause to dwell so much on this last quality. As to his inclination for the fair sex, she observed, that we are all but human creatures; to be sure he has carried it in some things too far; but the misfortune is, that his highness has not yet met with an object that captivated his heart as much as his eyes; for such a person would certainly have performed wonders, both for the good of the country, and for the prince's reputation.

My aunt agreed with her in all she said, while I sat silent, as in this portrait of a prince I could not remark one single feature of him whom my father's observations on a real prince, while I was reading history, had left on my memory. I was very glad that my opinion was not asked; but when the countess took me into her chamber to shew me his picture, I could truly say, that he makes a fine figure on canvas, as he really does. My aunt is desirous of having my picture drawn; and I have consented, as I am sure of giving pleasure to my

my EMILIA, by sending her a copy of it. I know you will thank me for this intended present, and am, &c.

P. S. I beg to know my guardian's thoughts of this letter.

### LETTER III.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

ALL that my last letter informed you of was, that my Lord SEYMOUR had found his best friend in myself; and I beg my dear guardian's prayers, as the only thing in the power of man to do for me.

You love me, EMILIA; you know me; but little thought of the disquietude you say I give your father and you. All this I acknowledge. The warm esteem I have express'd for so shining a character as that of Lord SEYMOUR, fills you both with apprehensions; but, my dear, I beg of my guardian and you to make yourselves easy, since all the part I can take in that nobleman, arises merely from the affection I feel for Miss C. She is the person he loves; she is the person he designs to make happy. My participation is only the complacence which a generous heart finds in the happiness of its friends, and the contemplation of the good qualities of its fellow creatures. Besides, my dear EMILIA, from my being at present

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 71

sent convinc'd that there really exists a man who is possessed of goodness, wisdom, generosity, and all the happy endowments that adorn the heart and the mind; a *despicable* man, or he who has no other advantage than a *lively wit*, and a person and qualities merely *agreeable*, will never have any influence over my heart; and this, which I account no small advantage, I owe to my acquaintance with his lordship.

I am the more concerned at the accident which hinders your father from using his right arm, as it deprives me of the pleasure and advantage of receiving his letters. Don't think, my dear EMILIA, that I am dissatisfied with your's; but I should know more of his own thoughts from himself, than from you. I hope his arm will soon be well, and then I beg he will kindly make me amends for this disappointment.

Yesterday we were splendidly entertained at dinner by my Lord G. where Count F. came to us in the afternoon, and late in the evening the whole company repaired to the prince's. The count has an agreeable person, and is distinguished by his abilities. His lady herself introduced him to me. There, said she, talk yourself with my favourite, and tell me, whether I am in the wrong to wish I had such a daughter. He then said a great many very polite things to me, yet ey'd me with an attention which appeared so singular and out of the way, that it fill'd me with confusion.

The Lord SEYMOUR plac'd himself at table between Miss C. and me, and confin'd his talk



talk chiefly to us: amidst other gallantries, during coffee he presented to both some English verses written on cards, desiring me to translate them for Miss C. On Lady F.'s coming up to me with her husband, they withdrew, and talk'd a long while at another window. The count at length went from me to my Lord G. taking with him the Lord SEYMOUR. Mean while Miss C. and I amused ourselves with viewing the pictures and engravings, till we were sent for to play. Count F. and the Lord G. then coming up to us, talked to me about my father, who was once well known to the former, and also about my grandmother WATSON, whom he had seen at her first arrival in Germany, protesting that there was a very striking likeness between us. The Lord SEYMOUR was all this while with Miss C. looking very grave and thoughtful, and, I thought, his eyes sometimes seemed fixed, with a kind of uneasiness, on me and the two lords. A sudden bustle of people in the street drew us all to the windows, and I went to that where Lord SEYMOUR and Miss C. were standing. It was the noise of people returning from seeing the prince land, after his being engaged in a party of pleasure on the water. While I was considering the number of people who passed by, many of whom had the look and dress of indigence, while we were cloathed with the most pompous ostentation, and the heaps of gold that were spread on the card tables, Miss C. gave me an account of a like entertainment on the water, calculated the expence, and said that

that then also an infinite number of people had run from all parts to see it. I could not help being affected at these ideas, and saying, How insignificant are such diversions to me!

Why so? Were you once to see them, you would be of a different opinion.—The Lord SEYMOUR continued all the time dull and silent.—No, my dear C. never shall I think otherwise, while I see, on the one hand, the pomp of the entertainment, the splendor of the court, the heaps of gold on these card-tables, and on the other a multitude of poor wretches with emaciated looks and thread-bare cloaths that bespeak their wretchedness: this contrast would fill my soul with melancholy and pity; it would make me hate my own exterior splendor, and that of others; the prince and his court would appear to me as a set of inhuman beings, who seem to take a pleasure in the infinite difference between them and those unfortunate people who come to contemplate their proud magnificence.

My dear child, what a severe lecture are you giving us! Forbear running to such extremes! said Miss C.

My dear friend, my heart is in a ferment! Yesterday the Countess of F. dwelt with such parade on the prince's diffusive liberality, and to-day how many miserable objects have I seen!

Here the young lady snatch'd my hand, and cried Hush! hush! — My Lord SEYMOUR, fixing a serious look on me, lifted up his hands, saying, What a noble soul! What an excellent heart! You cannot, Miss C. love your friend

too much. Yet princes are not to be censured. Very seldom is the real state of their subjects laid before them.

I am ready to believe it, answered I; but my lord, did not the people crowd the banks where the barges passed? Has not the prince eyes, that would, without any information, shew him a thousand fit objects of his compassion? Why did he not feel for them?

Dearest miss, how glorious is your warmth! Yet shew it only to your friend.

Here the Lord G. call'd his nephew; and, soon after, we return'd home.

To-day an extraordinary scene pass'd between my aunt and me. Though but just dress'd, I was reading, when she came into the room. I am jealous of your books, said she: you have been up early, and are dress'd, why then will you not let me have your company? You know how fond I am of it. Your uncle is continually taken up with his plaguy law-suit, and poor I must begin to prepare for my lying-in; yet you can unkindly spend the whole morning in your dry morality. Bestow those hours on me, and give me your author for security.

I would very willingly, aunt, wait on you; but I cannot forsake my best friends.

Come, come along with me! this point we'll debate in my chamber.

I follow'd her. She seated herself at her toilet, and I had about a quarter of an hour's chat with her two sons, who are fine boys, and were admitted to see their mamma. But on their



their going away I sat like one that could not help it; saw the extravagant pains she took in dressing herself, and was surfeited with court news, the intrigues of ambition, scandal, and magnified ideas of my uncle's interest and grandeur. Be sure, added she, to carry it very respectfully to the Countess of F.; you may do your uncle great service, and at the same time procure something very handsome for yourself.

That, aunt, I neither comprehend nor wish; yet nothing that I can do for you shall be wanting.

My dear SOPHY, thou art a charming girl! but I am vex'd to my very heart, that the old parson has infected thee with so many of his pedantic notions. For God's sake get rid of some of them!

I am convinc'd, madam, that a court life does not suit my temper; my taste and inclinations run quite counter to it; and I must be so free as to declare, that I shall return with more pleasure than I came.

As yet you know nothing of the court: when the prince is here we are all alive; and then I shall hear what you think of it. In the mean time, conclude that you are not to return into the country before the next spring.

Oh! with submission, madam, I go with the Countess of R. when she returns, next autumn.

Am I then to be left alone during my lying-in?

So saying, she cast a very tender look on me, and holding out her hand, I kiss'd it, assuring

her that I would not fail being with her when the time came.

Before dinner I went to my apartment, and walking up to my book-case, was surprized to find it quite empty. How comes this about, ROSINA? The count has been here, and ordered every thing to be removed. He said it was a frolic of the countess's.

A coarse kind of frolic, which they will never be the better for. I shall only write the more; but I'll not buy any new books, that they may not be offended at my obstinacy. Oh that my dear aunt R. would come soon! With what pleasure should I fly to her! She is peaceable, affectionate, and seeks in the beauties of nature, in science, and in the love of order, that satisfaction which is here eagerly pursued, but never found; and on that account they are perpetually finding fault with human life.

Miss C. has enter'd on her English lessons, and I believe will soon learn. She already knows many affectionate phrases and kind expressions, by which I know her instructor. She dined with us, when I merrily complain'd to my aunt of my being robb'd of my books, and Miss C. sided with her. A good contrivance, said she; we shall now see what turn our friend's mind will take, when left to itself, without a guide. I join'd in the laugh, saying, I am of the same opinion as a worthy man of letters, who says, "Women's feelings are frequently more just than the reasonings of men." — I however obtain'd permission to work, on my

my observing that I could not bear to be perpetually sitting all the morning at the toilette, or playing and idling away all the afternoons; and I have begun a fine piece of embroidery, in which I propose using great diligence;

To-morrow comes the prince, and with him the whole court. This evening came the foreign ministers. The Lord G. who was late in his visit, brought with him, besides the Lord SEYMOUR, the Lord LOVEILL, another English nobleman, introducing him as his cousin, who, from what he had heard him and Lord SEYMOUR say, was very desirous of becoming acquainted with me, and the more as he found that I was half his countrywoman. Lord LOVEILL immediately addressed me in English. He is a very handsome figure, has much wit, and an agreeable address. Being invited to supper, he cheerfully accepted the invitation, and as it would be moon-shine, and the evening was fair, my aunt proposed our eating in the garden.

The saloon was instantly illuminated, and my aunt very lovingly said at the door, as she was going out with Lord G. SOPHY, my dear, your lute, by moon-light, would add to the pleasure of the evening, and we should be obliged to you.

I ordered it to be brought. The Lord LOVEILL gave me his hand; and SEYMOUR went before with Miss C. The saloon being at the end of the garden, near the water-side, we had a considerable way to walk. Lord LOVEILL's discourse turned in a very respectful manner



manner on the many fine things he had heard of me. My uncle joined us, and when we were but a few steps above half way, he gave me a gentle push, saying. Look! look! How warmly the demure SEYMOUR can kiss a pretty hand by moon-light! I looked, and, O my dear EMILIA! it seem'd as if I felt a shivering. It doubtless proceeded from the coolness of the evening air, on our approaching the water: but a doubt arising in my mind, whether it might not also proceed from another cause, as I felt it only at that time, I could not help mentioning it to you.

Now likewise came the young Count F. the minister's nephew, who seeing the servant with the lute, ask'd who it was for, took it, and began thrumming at the saloon door, till my uncle looking to see who it was, saw him, and brought him in. Before we sat down to table, I was desired to play and sing. Not being in spirits, I sung, more from instinct than choice, a song on the quiet, freedom and delights of a country life. I myself felt the air too moving, and my aunt call'd to me, Child, you'll throw us all into the vapours. Why are you for proclaiming how you long to leave us? Let us have some other song! I obey'd with a pastoral taken from an opera, and it was very well received. My Lord G. asked me, whether I was not acquainted with English music. I said No, but that I would endeavour to follow if I heard any body sing. Upon this the Lord LOVEILL sung. He has a fine voice, but was rather too quick. I accompanied him with  
my

my late, and received many compliments on my musical ear.

The Countess of F. said many kind things to me; Lord SEYMOUR not a word; he often walk'd into the garden alone, and return'd with looks that shew'd violent agitations of mind, speaking to none but Miss C. who appeared very penfive. Lord G. ey'd me very attentively, with satisfaction in his countenance. Lord LOVEILL viewed me with the flaming eyes of a hawk, in which were express'd inquietude. My uncle and aunt loaded me with careffes. In short, about eleven we withdrew to rest, and I seiz'd that opportunity of writing this letter. Good night, dear EMILIA! Desire our respectable father to pray for me. That thought imparts tranquility and joy.

#### LETTER IV.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

I Wish my aunt would frequently take little journeys into the country; for I should accompany her with much more satisfaction than I do in the perpetual round of our court and town visits. My uncle has a sister-in-law in the convent of ladies at G. with whom, on account of her great fortune, he is desirous of keeping up a good correspondence for the sake

of his children. For this reason my aunt took a journey to see her, accompanied by her two sons. She also took me with her, and thus gave me the pleasure, which I gratefully acknowledge, of contemplating various scenes of nature and art. Had it only been the sight of the rising and setting sun, this, at a distance from D, would alone have given me pleasure: but I saw more. The way we travelled lay through no inconsiderable space of German land, which had frequently a rude and sterile appearance, notwithstanding the toilsome and patient culture of the laborious inhabitants. Tender compassion, and grateful thanks for my being freed from excessive fatigue, fill'd my heart at beholding their rugged labour, while with grave but resign'd looks they viewed our splendid chaises. The respect with which they saluted us, as the favourites of Providence, had something in it that affected me; and I endeavoured to contract an humane fellowship with them, by means of some pieces of money which I tossed, unask'd, to the nearest: particularly I gave to some poor women, who, while they were at work, had here and there a child sitting on the ground. My aunt, thought I, is on a journey, in hopes of reaping advantage for her sons, and these poor women undergo a deal of toil and trouble for theirs: I will be the means of their receiving an unexpected advantage.

The servant who rode after us, told us how rejoiced these poor people were, and that they called down blessings on us.

Rich



Rich fields, well fed cattle, and the large barns of the peasants, in other places shewed the happiness of their situation, and I wish'd they would make a good use of these blessings. My sensations, as usual, were very agreeable at the first sight of these marks of happiness, till gradually entering into myself, I drew a comparison between their peace and tranquility, and my own severer lot.

By the way we call'd in at Count W.'s seat, which I cannot forbear describing. It stands on the top of a hill, and has a very extensive prospect of a fine country, diversified with fields, meadows, and rich farms. Through the valley, in the front, flows a river that abounds with fish, and the adjacent eminences are crown'd with woods. The hill on which the house is seated is laid out in gardens and walks, according to the refined taste of the former owner, who endeavoured to unite the agreeable and the useful.

This, with the nobleman's hospitality, his choice library, his set of instruments for experimental philosophy, the excellent economy of the house (equally remote from prodigality and penuriousness), the appointment of a physician for the whole manor, the support during life granted to all the good and faithful domestics, the abilities and probity of the officers of the household, with many prudent regulations for the good of the tenants, are so many shining monuments of the taste, abilities, humane views, and noble disposition of the late proprietor, who, after filling with the highest

reputation several important posts at a foreign court, closed his valuable life in this delightful recess. His heir seems to have inherited, with his estate, his affability and goodness, so that to his house the worthiest persons in the neighbourhood resort. During the six days we spent there, our playing at cards gave me an idea which I should have been very glad to have heard discuss'd by Mr. Br—. Many strangers being come, card-tables were necessarily provided for their entertainment, as of twenty persons, many were of different geniuses and dispositions, as evidently appeared at dinner, and in our walks, where every one, according to his own humour and ideas, discoursed of the objects that presented themselves; some frequently running counter not only to the finer sentiments of virtue, but to the plain duties of humanity: yet while at play, one soul seem'd to reign in all, for all acquiesced in the known laws of the game without the least murmur or contradiction; nor was any one affronted at being reminded that he transgress'd the rules, but own'd his fault, and, agreeably to the dictates of one more expert, strove not to relapse.

I could not help wondering, and admiring the contrivance of play, as a kind of spell which instantly knits together for several hours, in a pleasing intercourse, persons of different nations, that cannot exchange a single word, and of no less different characters and dispositions; when, without this expedient, it would have been next to impossible to have hit on any amusement so agreeable to the general taste.

taſte. I cannot help dwelling on the thought. How is it that a perſon learns games of ſeveral kinds, and is ſo ſtudious to avoid deviating from the laws of play, that nothing which paſſes in the room can make him forget himſelf; when, a quarter of an hour before, nothing could reſtrain him from ſpeaking in oppoſition to the laws of decency and virtue? One of the company, who play'd extremely well, yet, with a ſmiling countenance, ſeem'd perfectly unconcern'd while he loſt his money, had a little before, on a queſtion concerning tenants, ſpoke of them as if they had been ſo many hounds, and cruelly adviſed a young nobleman, juſt come to the poſſeſſion of his eſtate, to keep them in the utmoſt ſubjection, and not to fail, on any conſideration, to make them clear their accounts once a year.

Why, ſaid my heart, why is man more inclin'd to ſubmit to the merely arbitrary laws form'd by the inventor of a game, than to the plain and ſalutary duties preſcribed by the moſt wiſe and gracious Legiſlator, with a view of rendering him happy? And why is it not permitted to put him in mind that he tranſgreſſes thoſe duties? Theſe thoughts I did not dare to reveal to my aunt, as ſhe has on other occaſions, with ſome aſperity, cenſur'd my morals as too auſtere and ſtreight-lac'd; and which, as ſhe ſaid, ſet me at variance with all the recreations of life. I cannot conceive why this is laid to my charge. I can be chearful; I love company, muſic, and even dancing; but offences againſt humanity and decency I



I cannot bear, without shewing my disapprobation; and it is impossible for me to find entertainment in mere spiritless chat, without either wit or sentiment, and in idly spending whole days in talking on the most frivolous subjects.

Oh that I could find in our great assemblies, or among the friends of our family at D. one person like the canonesse I have been to visit, I should not then be tax'd with being of a too reserv'd and gloomy disposition! That candid lady inform'd me that she had conceived an esteem for me, and, though a stranger, the treatment I received from her greatly exceeded that of a cold politeness. As I had the happiness to continue to please her, it procur'd me the benefit of a thorough acquaintance with her many excellencies. Never did I find such strength and elevation of mind as in this lady. Her genius and agreeable flow of wit qualify her for the best company. She is eminently possessed of an uncommon happiness of expression in whatever she says and writes, and all her thoughts may be compared to beautiful figures cloath'd by the Graces in easy and flowing robes. Whether she was serious, cheerful, or friendly, I was charmed with the justness of her thoughts, and the natural unaltered amiableness of her disposition. A mind filled with just sentiments, and warm feelings of whatever has real beauty and goodness, with a heart formed for the generous reciprocations of friendship, compleat her amiable character.

It

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 85

It is only for the sake of this lady that I have wished, for the first time, that I was of an ancient noble family, to entitle me to a place in that protestant convent, that I might spend my whole life in her valuable company, where I am persuaded all the inconveniencies of a cloistered life would scarce be felt.

I judge yourself, how nearly it went to my heart to leave this amiable lady, though she had the goodness, in some measure, to make up the loss of her delightful conversation, by the favour of promising me her correspondence. You shall see her letters, and then you will be convinced that I have said no more of her abilities than they deserve.

The modesty which forms a striking lineament in the character of her friend the Countess of G. shall not hinder me, as she will never see this letter, from saying, that it was this excellent lady which, next to the former, had the greatest share in the wish that it was possible for me to pass my life in that happy retreat. A sequestered merit, the more engaging, from its avoiding notice and parade; a refined genius, enriched with great knowledge and eloquence, and united with the most candid sincerity and goodness of heart, entitle this lady to the esteem and friendship of every noble mind: even the thick veil, under which her too great modesty concealed her pre-eminence, exalted her in my eye. She scarce ever lays this veil aside, except in the chamber of the Countess of S. whose approbation seems to have rendered her

her indifferent with respect to the commendations of any one else. Enchanting as her skill on the harpsichord is, the only value she sets upon it is, that it pleases her friend.

Among the other worthy ladies of this convent, I cannot omit the Countess of T.W. who consecrates her days to the active virtues, and employs her talents, in instructing girls who have no fortune in all kinds of ingenious works becoming our sex.—Particularly, with a most affectionate respect, let me remember the princess who is at the head of this convent. Was any thing capable of exciting my envy, it would be the real, the inestimable felicity of passing through life under the guidance of the experienced virtue and prudence of such an excellent, such a tender governess.

As for my aunt's chief view in this journey, I shall only observe, that it has turned out entirely to her wish. We are now returned to D. and to the multitude of visits which we have had to pay and receive, you will kindly attribute the blame of your having been so long without a line from me.

Adieu, my dear EMILIA! My heart is never absent from you.

LET.



LETTER V.

*Lord SEYMOUR to Dr. BURTON.*

*Dear friend,*

I Have frequently heard you say, that from the observations you made, in your travels through Germany, on the natural genius of that nation, you wished to see united the profundity of our philosophers with the methodical manner of the Germans, and that their phlegmatic temper had more of our lively imagination. Hence you have for a long time endeavoured to temper, by a happy mixture, my natural ardour, considering it as the only obstacle which, notwithstanding my taste for the sciences, prevented my arriving at a certain degree of perfection. You took none but the mildest methods with me, and knowing my sensibility, imagined that you ought to govern my head by my heart. How far you, my worthy friend, have succeeded in this, I cannot determine; but you have brought me to know, and, I hope I may say, to love real goodness. I would die rather than do any thing base, or beneath a man of humanity; yet I question whether you will be satisfied with me, when you know with what impatience I bear my uncle's authority. It seems as if my soul was bow'd down under the weight of a triple yoke, which constrains all its exertions;  
when

when I consider my Lord G. as my uncle, as a man of great wealth to whom I am heir, and as a minister on whom the post I fill renders me dependant. Do not, however, be under any apprehensions that I shall forget myself so far as to quarrel with his lordship: I have so much power over my emotions, that they only discover themselves by a melancholy, which I endeavour to conceal or divert. But why do I use such a multitude of words in preparing you for the subject of this letter, which is to inform you, that I have seen a young lady in whom the two national characters are most happily blended. Her grand-mother, on the female side, was daughter to Sir WILLIAM WATSON, and her father a person of the most eminent merit, whose memory is still held in the highest veneration. This young lady is intimate with Miss C. whom I mentioned in a former letter; and it is but a few weeks since the lady, SOPHIA STERNHEIM, first came here, she having before lived entirely in the country. I forbear making rapturous exclamations on her transcendent charms: but believe me, I do not exceed the truth in saying, that all the graces, of which the figure and motions of a female are capable, are united in her: a courteous gravity of countenance, a politeness full of dignity, an unreserved affection for her friend, a goodness perfectly adorable, and the most refined delicacy in her sentiments, are only what she inherits from her excellent grand-mother. She has a mind free from

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 89

from prejudices, adorned with knowledge, and filled with the best principles; a noble firmness of shewing these principles, and in maintaining them; in short, many talents joined to the most amiable modesty: all this she owes to the worthy man who had the happiness of being her father. From this description, dear Doctor, you may guess what an impression she has made on me. Never, no never, was my heart so filled with love, nor with the happiness we feel in loving!—But what will you say, when you hear that this lovely maid, with all her fine qualities, is intended to be the prince's mistress? That my lord has forbidden my mentioning my love to her, because Count F. one of the authors of this project, already apprehends many obstacles on her part, though it is very certain that she was brought to court only with that view? I express'd to my uncle the utmost indignation at Count LOBAU, her uncle, having entertained so base a thought. I would have informed the dear lady of the execrable plot formed against her; I even begg'd his Lordship's leave to marry her, and thus save from ruin so lovely and excellent a creature. He bad me quietly attend to what he had to say, told me that he himself had a great value for the young lady, and was persuaded that she would frustrate the whole scene of iniquity; assuring me, that if she acted agreeably to her fine character, he should with pleasure crown her virtue. “But while, added he, the whole court looks upon her as the  
“destined



" destined mistress of the prince, I cannot  
 " consent to your taking any step in this af-  
 " fair. You ought not to marry a woman  
 " whose reputation is in the least suspected.  
 " Attach yourself to Miss C. By her you  
 " will be informed of the dispositions of her  
 " friend; and I will give her an account of  
 " the vile scheme with which Count F. is in-  
 " trusted. I have good hopes, from the young  
 " lady's character, that this will end in an  
 " illustrious triumph of virtue; but it must  
 " be visible to the eyes of the world."

My uncle excited in me the desire of seeing  
 the prince mortified. I represented to myself  
 SOPHIA's resistance and triumph, as a ravishing  
 sight, and that thought determined me to fol-  
 low his directions. My Lord LOVEILL had  
 also given me another motive for doing it: he,  
 on seeing her, was immediately fired with her  
 charms (for I cannot call it love) and has been  
 before-hand with me in owning his tenderness.  
 If he be able to move her, there is an end to  
 my happiness. Yes, it would be nearly the  
 same as if she gave herself up to the prince;  
 for if she can love an abandoned libertine, she  
 would certainly never love me. Mean while,  
 how dreadful is my situation! I love the most  
 worthy object, whom I unfortunately see every  
 where hemmed in by the snares of vice. I am  
 agitated by turns, by my hopes founded on  
 her virtuous principles, and by the apprehen-  
 sion of her being lost by the power of human  
 frailty. To-day, my friend, to-day she is, for  
 the

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 91

the first time, to be exposed to the prince's eye, at an opera at court. I am something indisposed, but I will go, though it should cost me my life.

\* \* \*

I am all alive, my friend ! Count F. is in doubt whether any thing can be done with this virtuous young lady.

My lord ordered me to keep near him during the opera. SOPHIA and her worthless aunt came into Lady F.'s box. She was so ravishingly lovely, that I could not contemplate her without a mixture of pain ; but the moment in which I bowed to the three ladies, at the same time with my lord, was the only look I ventured to take. Soon after flocked in all the other nobility, and the prince himself, whose libidinous eyes were instantly turned to Lady F.'s box. The young lady paid her respects with such a grace as must have attracted his notice, had she no other charms. He directed his discourse to Count F. and looking again at SOPHIA, bowed particularly to her. All eyes were now fixed on her : but she soon after partly hid herself behind Lady F. The opera began, during which the prince talked much with Count F. who at length removed to his lady's box, to reprove my lord and the two countesses for depriving miss of her place, though they had often been at the opera, and she was never there before.

It is not on the ladies account, said the young lady gravely to the minister, that I have chosen  
this

this place. I here see well enough, with the additional satisfaction of being less seen.

But you deprive so many of the pleasure of seeing you.—She answered only with an inclination of her body, as an intimation of the little value she set on his compliment. He asked her opinion of the opera, to which she answered, in a manner peculiar to herself, that she did not wonder at so many persons being fond of that entertainment.

But I desired to know how *you* like it. Tell me what you think of it! You look very grave.

I admire the assemblage of so many arts and talents.

And is that all? Are you not charmed with the heroes and heroines of the piece?

No, not in the least, answer'd she with a smile.

The prince, the envoys, and other strangers, among whom was Count LOBAU, uncle to SOPHIA, supped at the Princess of W.'s. The Countess of F. presented that young lady with much ceremony to the prince, who for a long time affected to talk very highly of her father; but she was very brief in her answers, and her accent expressed uneasiness. At the table, a gentleman and lady were placed in regular order. Count F. a nephew of the minister's, sat next to SOPHIA, and she was placed opposite to the prince, who perpetually kept his eyes on her. I was upon my guard, and seldom looked at the dear lady, yet could perceive her something discomposed. The table was removed



## LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 93

removed to make way for play, when the princess, taking miss with her, walked round the card-tables, and then seating herself on a sofa, entered into an affable and kind conversation with her; and the prince, after playing some time with my lord, joined them.

Two days after Count F. said to my uncle, I wish Count LOBAU hang'd for bringing this lady hither. She is every way formed to inspire love; but a young woman who derives no vanity from her charms, who at an opera minds nothing but the assemblage of so many arts and talents, at a luxurious table eats nothing but an apple and drinks nothing but water, who at court only sighs after the country, yet plainly wants neither wit nor sentiment, is a *rara avis*, and not easily overcome.

Heavens grant it! thought I; for my present distracted situation is more than I can support.

Write to me soon! Tell me what you think of me, and what you would have me do!

much testimony to the prince, who for a long time affected to talk very highly of her father; but she was very brief in her answers, and her accent expressed uneasiness. At the table, gentlemen and lady were placed in regular order. Count F., nephew of the minister, sat next to SOPHIA, and she was placed opposite to the prince, who perpetually kept his eyes on her. I was upon my guard, and lest I should look at the dear lady, yet could perceive her something discomposed. The table was removed.

## LETTER VI.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

**O** My EMILIA ! how do I want the reviving comfort of a tender and virtuous friend ! Alas ! it was an unfortunate day when I was persuaded to set out for D. It has drawn me out of the sphere in which I was moving with such sweet serenity and content. I am here of no use to any one, and least of all to myself. My best thoughts and sensations I dare not disclose, I being already looked upon as ridiculously serious ; and whatever pains I take to shew complaisance to those among whom I live, whatever endeavours I use to adopt their language, seldom is my aunt pleased with me, and as seldom am I pleased with her. If I know myself, I am neither opinionated nor conceited. I do not desire any one here to think like me, which I am persuaded is impossible. I take no offence that the morning is passed at the toilet, the afternoon in visits, the evening and night at play. This is the grand world, and such is here the established method of passing through life. My former wonder at seeing one who had lived with my grandmother so deficient in the most valuable kinds of learning, though far from wanting capacity, is greatly abated ; for, my dear friend, it is quite impossible for a young person to acquire them, while

while carried away by the whirlwind of tumultuous diversions. In short, all here appear to adopt the reigning ideas, and the fashionable mode of life, with as much pleasure as I feel in conforming to the principles which instruction and the dearest examples have planted in my heart. My ideas and opinions are not relaxed: I must adopt their thoughts and sensations, pride myself in the elegance and richness of my dress, place my happiness in being admired, and be enraptured at an entertainment or a ball. The opera, which was the first I had ever seen, should have transported me out of my senses, and made me think myself in heaven; and I should have been no less enraptured by the prince's compliments. During the performance, somebody or other was perpetually saying, Now, miss, are you not highly pleas'd? How do you like it?

Pretty well, answered I, quite soberly: it perfectly comes up to the idea I had conceiv'd of such exhibitions. This quite displeased, and I was look'd upon as one who knew not what she said. Possibly my little inclination for such entertainments may proceed from a want of sensibility, though I rather think it an effect of the impression made on me by a very animated description of them I have read in an English author, who exclaims, What a ridiculous and unnatural figure does a general make singing on the field of battle? and an enamoured heroine warbling away her last breath? I would not, however, censure those who are fond of this entertainment with having



a bad taste. The combination of so many arts employed to gratify the eye and ear, is very pleasing, and nothing seems to me more natural than the passions being mov'd by an actress or a dancer. If she first plays with skill, if she enters entirely into the spirit of her part, if she expresses the tender, the noble sentiments that flow from a full soul; if, at the same time, she has beauty, and this is joined to a splendid dress, soft music, and all the various illusions of the theatre, it must be difficult for a young man, who with a feeling heart enters the theatre, to resist the united efforts of nature and art to seduce him.

The female dancer, surrounded with the laughing graces, has attractions in every motion—indeed, EMILIA, who can wonder if she raises the passions! Yet I think the lover of the actress less inexcusable than that of the dancer. I have somewhere read that the line of beauty is nicely drawn for the painter and sculptor; if he goes beyond it he is lost, and if he does not reach it, so far his work falls short of perfection. So the line of moral beauty for the dancer seems to me to be no less exactly drawn, but she often steps over it.

Upon the whole, I am very well pleased at having seen one of these entertainments, which perfectly agrees with the idea I had formed of them; but very easy shall I be if I never see another.

After the opera I supp'd with the Princess of W. where I was presented to the prince. What shall I say of him? He is indeed a hand-

handsome man, and is very polite; he was profuse in the praises he bestow'd on my father, and those praises did not please me.—No, my dear EMILIA, I no longer felt the joy of hearing encomiums bestow'd on him. The voice with which they were spoken sounded as if he had said, I know how conceited you are of your father, and therefore I will praise him. And then, my dear, the looks the prince cast at me, would have spoilt all the best things he could have said.—Such looks, my dear! God preserve me from ever seeing them again!—How I abhor that Spanish dress, which allow'd me nothing but a tippet. Oh! if ever I was proud of dress, I yesterday suffer'd a severe penance for it. I cannot express the anguish of my soul, at being the object of such odious looks. It signifies nothing talking; I cannot bear to be here any longer! I will hasten to you, EMILIA, and the remains of my honour'd ancestors. Lady R. too delays her coming.

To-day the Countess of F. told me, with a tedious multiplicity of words, how the prince praised my person and wit.

To-morrow the count gives a splendid dinner, and I am to be there. Never since I have been here have I enjoyed the solace of festivity, according to my own taste. The friendship of Miss C. was the only thing in which I rejoic'd; but that is not what it was. She speaks to me with such coldness; she never visits me, and I am never her partner at play. If I come up to her or Lord SEYMOUR, who are always together, they drop their discourse, and my

Lord, with a dejected look, retires, while Miss, fill'd with confusion, still keeps her eye on him. What am I to think? Would not Miss C. have me speak to my lord? Does he withdraw to shew his entire submission? Then he speaks to no other soul but her. Oh, what a stranger is my heart here! I, who am ready to sacrifice my happiness to that of others, have the vexation to see that they apprehend my being an obstacle to theirs. Dear Miss C. I will dissipate your fears! I will forbid my eyes the pleasure of looking at my Lord SEYMOUR—and yet my looks were only fleeting. No more will I intrude when she is happy in the conversation of that amiable man—You shall see that your SOPHIA is far from seeking to rob you of his heart. At this thought, EMILIA, my eyes are filled with tears; but the loss of a beloved friend, the only one I had here; the loss of the conversation of a worthy man whom I esteem, deserve a tear. No other will I shed at D. Would to heaven that I was to leave it to-morrow.

Why does your letter tell me nothing of my guardian, nothing of your journey, nothing of your husband? Pray repair this instance of your forgetfulness, as your letters, your love and affection, are all the blessings I have to expect.



LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 69

LETTER VII.

*Lord LOVEILL to his friend at Paris.*

SOON will I silence thy insipid prate; and indeed my bearing it so long was only to see what lengths thou wouldst run in boasting and vapouring even to thy master's face. This very day shouldst thou feel the lash of my satire, had I not a mind to shew the plan of a German novel, the completing of which takes up all my thoughts. What signifies thy Parisian conquests, purchas'd by the help of gold? For without that, what couldst thou do with even a French woman, with thy long face and spindle shanks? Besides, what are the conquests of your right honourables at Paris? A coquette, an actress; both allow'd to be pretty, but so common that none but an ass would glory in their favours. Pray, loving countryman, have not I been there too, and don't I know, as certainly as such a thing can be known, that the well-bred daughter of a creditable family, and the good wife, distinguished by her wit and merit, are not the females within our reach? Therefore boast no more, good B. for such triumphs little deserve any *To Poems*. But to get possession of a masterpiece of nature and art, that has been consecrated to the gods; to lay asleep an Argus of prudence and virtue; to deceive ministers of

F 2

state;

state; to baffle all the deep machinations of a beloved rival, without his being aware of the hand that works his confusion; this, this deserves notice.

Thou knowest that I never allow'd love any power except over my senses, whose purest and choicest pleasure it is. Hence the choice of my eyes was always certain, and my objects continually varying. I have progressively subdued beauties of every class, and, satiated with the charms of the fair, have reduced ugliness under my slavery; after which I have reigned over different minds, and rendered all characters subject to my law. What a fine field for observation would it be for the moralist, did he but know all the subtle snares, all the nets artfully formed, with which I have caught the virtue, the pride, the discretion, the coquetry, and even the piety of the female world; so that, with Solomon, I have thought that to me there was nothing new under the sun. But love, who laughs at my vanity, has brought hither from a country cottage a colonel's daughter, a paragon of beauty, whose figure, genius and character, are so new and alluring, that, should she escape me, it would be a blot on my escutcheon as a man of intrigue. But I must keep a good look-out; SEYMOUR is in love with her, but can't move a step without my Lord G. while this rose is destin'd for the bosom of the prince, in order to get a law-suit determined in favour of her uncle. Count F's son, as a cloak, is willing to marry her; but if she loves him, he will marry her in earnest.

and  
which naturally  
accords

## LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 101

and overfet Count LOBAU's and his father's designs. That pitiful scoundrel fhall not have her; no, nor SEYMOUR, who, with his melancholy love, waits for the triumph of her virtue; no, nor the prince himfelf—he is moft unworthy of her. So fine a flower muft be cropt by none but me; that is as fix'd as fate. I have raifed the poffy of all my contrivances to find her weak fide. She is full of fenfibility, which I know from the looks ſhe frequently caſts on SEYMOUR, while even I am talking to her. She is likewise frank and ſincere; for ſhe told me to my face, that ſhe ſuſpected my heart wanted goodneſs. Why, ſaid I, do you think the Lord SEYMOUR better than I? She bluſhed, and answered, He undoubtedly is. Though theſe words filled me with raging jealousy, they at the ſame time ſhewed me the way to her heart. I am now reduced to a troubleſome diſſimulation, to bring my character to a uniſon with her's. But a time will come when this ſhall be reverſed; I ſhall make her's buckle to mine: for with her I will grudge no pains, and certainly ſhe will make new discoveries in the land of delight, when her pure and refined ſoul ſhall bend all its faculties that way. But praifing her graces and accompliſhments does not in the leaſt move her; a certain ſign that her heart is already engaged. An uncommonly ſublime genius, and a noble ſoul, ſeem in the higheſt degree united in her; and in her perſon, all the charms of an enchanting figure are joined, with a ſingular luſtre, to that gravity which naturally accom-



accompanies elevated principles. Every motion, the mere sound of her voice, begets love; and a look from her eyes seems to force us to silence, so much do they discover of the purity of her spotless soul.—But hold! How the deuce came I by all this ribaldry!—Shall this country girl make a fighting coxcomb of me? Yes, so far as to answer my purpose; but, by Jove, she shall dearly pay for it. I have brought over to my side my Lord G.'s under secretary, and that rogue is half a devil. He has studied divinity, but his debaucheries have occasioned his being stripped of his gown, and obliged him to lay aside all thoughts of being one of the clergy, and since that time he has endeavoured to be revenged on all the pious. Through him I'll sift Lord SARMOUR, whom he can't endure on account of his morals. Thou seest that the parson has undergone a strange metamorphosis; but, as I cannot here act myself, I have need of a fellow of his stamp.

So much for this time. Somebody is coming in.

LET

## LETTER VIII.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

**M**Y troubles are now more than I can bear. My guardian dead! Why did not you write to ROSINA or me, before all was over? Poor ROSINA is in the deepest affliction, and I endeavour to comfort her, with a heart little less affected than her own. Now, my dear friend, the earth covers the richest presents heaven has given us, our good, our worthy parents.—No heart is so sensible of the greatness of your loss, as mine. I doubly feel your pain. Why was not I to hear his last blessing? Why were not my tears to moisten his holy grave? I am sure I have all the filial affection, the respect, the grief of a daughter.—Poor ROSINA! she kneels by me, with her head resting on my bosom, and her eyes shedding a torrent of tears. I embrace and weep with her. God grant that our grief may make wisdom flourish in our souls, and thus accomplish the last wishes of our father! May heaven also grant the prayers he offered up for my EMILIA, when his trembling hand blessed your marriage, and committed you to the care of a faithful friend! May virtue and friendship be ROSINA's portion and mine, till the laws of mortality successively remove us to a state of happiness!

Then may some noble heart love me for setting a pattern of goodness that had influenc'd her conduct, and some poor, relieved by my hand, bless my memory! Then will the wise, then will the friend of mankind say, that I knew the value of life.

I am unable to proceed, nor can ROSINA for me. She recommends herself to the love of her brother and sister, and will continue to live with me. I hope you are not displeased, as it will strengthen the band of our friendship, and reciprocations of benevolence will preserve it from abatement. I embrace my EMILIA with tears. You cannot imagine how dreadful it is to close my letter without a respectful word to my guardian, who was indeed my paternal friend. Eternal happiness is his reward and that of my father! Let us, my EMILIA, my ROSINA, so live, that having imitated their virtue and friendship, we may be admitted to partake of their felicity!

going into her chamber, in order to wait on her to an assembly, he found her sitting at her desk, on her knees, before her father's portrait, which she had just been looking at, and was now looking at with a look of grief and sorrow. He saw her face was pale, and her eyes were red, and he knew she was in distress. He went to her, and she told him the story of her father's death, and how she had been left an orphan. He comforted her, and she told him of her love for her father, and how she had been left an orphan. He comforted her, and she told him of her love for her father, and how she had been left an orphan.



## LETTER IX.

*Lord SEYMOUR to Dr. BURTON.*

SOPHIA, I think, grows every day more charming—I, every day more wretched. The prince and LOVEILL strive to gain her esteem, which both see is the only way to her heart. This the two-fold caprice which my passion has adopted, prevents my doing. I am wholly taken up with observing her, while she shuns both Miss C. and me. I now no longer hear her speak, but every thing that is said of her by LOVEILL, for whom she shews some regard, confirms the high opinion I have of her soul; since the first emotions of virtue ever felt in his heart, I am persuaded, owe their origin to her. He told me the other day, that going into her chamber, in order to wait on her to an assembly, he found her chambermaid on her knees before her; SOPHIA herself but half dress'd; her fine hair hanging dishevell'd over her neck and breast, her arms locked round the girl, and, in a most pathetic voice, speaking to her on the happy death of the righteous, and the future rewards of virtue. Tears streamed from her eyes; but soon she raised them to heaven, blessing the memory of her father, and of some other man, for planting those joyful truths in her mind. He stood amaz'd, when she instantly seeing him, called

F 5

out,

out, O, my lord, your conversation will not  
 suit me at present! Be so good as to go and  
 excuse me to my aunt: tell her I can see no-  
 body to-day! Her solemn and affecting coun-  
 tenance imbitter'd her reproof, and made him  
 more keenly feel her contempt for his way of  
 thinking. He accordingly answer'd, that could  
 she see the respect which at that instant glow'd  
 in his breast, she would not think him totally  
 unworthy of her confidence. But seeing that,  
 instead of returning him an answer, she reclin'd  
 her head on that of her chambermaid, he took  
 his leave, and was inform'd by the Countess of  
 LOBAU, that this scene was occasioned by the  
 death of the minister of P. who had a share in  
 her education, and was her chambermaid's  
 father; but Count LOBAU and his spouse were  
 not a little pleased that the enthusiastic cor-  
 respondence, as they term'd it, between him  
 and SOPHIA, was at an end, as she might now  
 be brought to embrace ideas more suitable to  
 her birth and station. They both went along  
 with him to their niece's chamber, blam'd her  
 grief, and censured her for declining to go to  
 the assembly. Dear aunt, she reply'd, after  
 sacrificing so many weeks to the compliance I  
 owe you, and to the manners of the court,  
 surely the duties of friendship and virtue may  
 claim one poor day! Yes, return'd the  
 Countess, but your love has ever been confin'd  
 within *one* family, and you are not duly sensible  
 of the esteem and affection shewn you here.  
 Dear aunt, she replied, I am sorry to be ac-  
 cused of ingratitude! but surely he who has  
 fill'd

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 107

fill'd my mind with good principles, and useful literature, deserves a greater share of gratitude from me, than the polite stranger who obliges me to share in his transient diversions. This the countess took to herself, and, after some ill-natured sneers, told her, that since it was her humour, she might stay at home that day. This account LOVEILL gave me with an air of levity, yet had an eye to all my emotions, which, you know, I am not skillful in concealing; and in this case it was beyond the power of man. I was extremely mov'd at Lady SOPHIA's behaviour. I enviy'd LOVEILL's happiness in having seen and spoke to her; and the bitterness of my displeasure against him, the prince, my uncle, and even myself, carried me so far as to say, SOPHIA is a most lovely young lady. Such virtue! such a mind! Curse on the wretch who has any bad designs against her! You, said he, are as extraordinary in your way as she is in her's. You seem made to be her lover, and I to be your confidant and historian. No, my lord, said I, I believe that neither SOPHIA nor I would have made you any such offer. At this answer he wore a kind of horrid pensive smile; at which I could not help saying to myself, So looks Satan when bent on mischief.

K 6

LET



## LETTER X.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

**Y**OUR long silence, my friend, gave both ROSINA and me no little inquietude, yet the only revenge I will allow myself is, that the next journey I take of any length, I will write to you when it is half over; for as I know your love to me, I could not bear the thought of giving your gentle soul that concern which mine has, on this occasion, felt for you. But your happy arrival at W. and your agreeable prospect of futurity, made me ample amends. At the same time, my EMILIA, I am rejoiced at having an agreeable subject for some letters to you; for had I been oblig'd to go on with my complaints of disagreeable events, I should have trespassed on your repose; so tenderly does your affectionate heart interest itself in whatever concerns me, or affects my sensibility, which I own is rather too quick. In this country, so barren of moral entertainment, I have met with two resources and an interesting discovery which prevents my considering the time as lost during the three months I have been here. You know that the education I have received has turned my taste not to pompous and frivolous pleasures, but to such as are plain and useful.

Never.

Never was my mother's sensibility so much excited as at the relation of a noble and generous action; or at hearing an instance of humanity, or some other virtue; and never did she embrace and clasp me with such ardour to her bosom, as when I undertook a kind office for an acquaintance, a servant, or a poor tenant. Often have I observed that when, as is usual with children, I have happen'd to make some just remark, or to say something witty and sensible, she has only given a faint smile, and immediately endeavoured to turn the attention, and the praises the company bestowed on me, to things relating to active life, commending my application to the study of languages, my progress in drawing or music, and more particularly my having solicited favours, or performed acts of kindness for others; thus intimating to me, that good actions are far preferable to the most ingenious thoughts. How agreeably did my father illustrate this truth, by observing to me, from the vegetable kingdom, that the several kinds of flowers which only exhibit entertainment to the eye, are neither so numerous, nor so fruitful as the plants of real use, that afford food for man and beast. Every day of his life corresponded with this maxim. How studious was he to render his genius and knowledge of use to all with whom he was acquainted? His acts of kindness to his servants and inferiors can scarce be numbered. Under his guidance, EMILIA, and with such principles and inclinations did I enter

enter the gay world, where the general way of life is solely calculated to flatter the senses, and where a superior genius is allow'd to shew itself only in momentary flashes of wit and smart repartees.

My former ideas, thus planted, have not however entirely left me, and I never observe them more busy, than when I am fill'd with displeasure at opposite sentiments and proceedings. You yourself shall be judge. My love of Germany engaged me the other day in a dispute, in which I vindicated the honour of my country with such zeal, that my aunt exclaim'd, that I had given a fine proof of my being a professor's grand-daughter. This censure nettled me; the ashes both of my father and grand-father were violated, my self-love was wounded by the contempt thrown on them, and I instantly answered, That I had rather my dispositions should prove me descended from persons of a noble way of thinking, than that only some fine sounding name should cause me to be thought of an illustrious lineage. This occasioned a coldness between us for some days; however we insensibly became reconcil'd. My aunt, proud of her noble blood, was, I believe, sensible that it was being too severe to reproach any one with a defective ancestry, and I was displeased at my spiteful answer, which degraded me in my own eyes. But it is time for me to lead you to one of the resources I have mentioned at the beginning of this letter.

I-dis-



LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. III

I discovered the first, in the visits I received and paid with my aunt, which have afforded me an opportunity of making a multitude of observations on an infinite diversity of tempers, dispositions and characters, a diversity that appears in the things related, in the judgment passed upon others, and in wishes and complaints. At the same time what a circle of trifles are run through! and how eagerly do people endeavour to get rid of a day! Accustomed to prize things according to their real value, I cannot see without grief and pity, that thirst of pleasure, that taste for dress which reigns here. I omit that false ambition which plots base intrigues, meanly crouches at the foot of fortune, despises virtue and merit, and without remorse renders others wretched. How happy are you, my friend! Neither your birth nor circumstances have warp'd you aside from the moral line prescribed for us. You can, without apprehension, without obstruction, proceed in an uniform course of virtue, intermix'd with the most valuable, the most useful accomplishments, and in the day of your health, in the season of active life, do all that good which most of the great world, in their last hours, ardently wish that they had done.

Religion and virtue are however treated with a shew of respect; the churches frequented by the court are finely ornamented; great orators preach there; divine service is perform'd with solemnity and decent attendance. Looseness of words and proper actions are carefully ob-

served;

## THE HISTORY OF

served; no vice must appear without a mask. Nay the christian duty of love to our neighbour is in some measure considered as a present, which from a delicate and refin'd flattery, the self-love of one pays to that of another. Now all this is to me a copious source of moral reflections, so far useful, as it confirms the principles of my education. Often do I employ my imagination on the means of uniting the duties to which a court lady is called by her rank, with the duties that are the foundation of our eternal happiness. I have a faint view of the possibility of their being united: but it is so difficult to make them always consistent with each other, that I am not surpris'd at seeing that few make the attempt. How often have I thought that if a person like my father had the post of prime minister he would be the most beloved, the most happy man in the universe.

'Tis true, his days would be attended with care and fatigue; yet the consideration of the extensive sphere of action it would afford his abilities and his benevolence, in promoting the welfare of many thousands, both living and yet unborn; this animating prospect to a pious and good mind, would render every thing light and agreeable. His knowledge of the human heart would make him find the most proper means of gaining the confidence of the prince; while his probity, his natural superiority and strength of mind would give such support to his authority, that the courtiers and placemen

## LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 113

placemen would be as ready to shew their obedience to the able and virtuous minister, as they too often are to the weakness of the head and the vices of the heart in him from whom they expect favours and preferment. Thus my EMILIA do I frequently amuse myself, since my being acquainted with the character and circumstances in which this or that person is found. My imagination places me in the rank of those I judge: I compare the obligations imposed on all men by the great CREATOR, with the power and means he has given of fulfilling them: I think what they are, and what they ought to be. Thus have I been by turns a prince, a princess, a favourite, a minister, the mother of such children, the wife of such a husband, and in each situation have found different ways of doing good, by following the rules dictated by prudence. I have discovered among many persons such just ideas, and such laudable actions, that I have heartily acknowledged their superiority; while in comparing myself with others, I have been more satisfied with the dictates of my own head and heart than with theirs. After these ideal excursions fancy has naturally led me to a retrospect on myself, and the duties assigned me, and I have resolved to be no less strict in that enquiry than I have been with respect to others; and thus, EMILIA, have I discovered a source of reflections on myself, for more deeply engraving on my heart, knowledge, sentiment, and a conviction of what is good; but



# THE HISTORY OF

but at the same time I am more and more convinc'd how much a great observer of human actions was in the right in asserting, that very few duly exert all their physical and moral strength: for indeed I have found many void spaces within the circle of my life, and others filled with what I disapprove, or with trifles of no use. This shall now be remedied, and as I am not one of those happy beings who enter into life complete in soul and body, I will insist among the people who are grown wise by observing the faults of others, that my lot may not be among those who can only be reform'd by their experience and their sufferings.

I shall make no apology for this long train of reflections: the history of my ideas, you say, interest you as much as the journal of what passes while I am at D. I shall resume that in another letter. Adieu, my EMILIA, you know the heart of your SOPHIA.

LET

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 175

LETTER XI.

Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.

YOU are indeed a real friend; and most sincerely do I thank you for sending me back to that part of my education which led me to put myself in the place of those I was inclined to censure; not only for the sake of seeing how I would have behaved in their situation, but to acquire that humane disposition which is so just and reasonable, of not branding every thing as base and wicked, that contradicts my principles, or crosses my inclinations. What prompted you to this was, it seems, your thinking my dislike to the courts too hasty, too severe, and, as you intimate, bordering on injustice. I have followed your kind advice, and have seen the court in a new point of view, that has moderated the disadvantageous impression I had entertained of it. I say to myself, that as in the material world every species of beings has its appointed circle, within which those beings find every thing necessary to their perfection; perhaps also in the moral world, a court may be the only sphere in which the perfection of certain faculties, both of soul and body can be unfolded: for example, the highest degree of refinement and perfection in the taste, with respect to whatever affects the senses and depends on.

on the imagination. The court is also the most proper stage for shewing the extreme subtileness of which the mind and body are capable; a quality which is perceived in the manners, in the delicacy of expressions, in the happy turn given to thoughts; and, what is more, in the conduct according to which politics, fortune or ambition, agitate, in some degree or other, the air we breathe there. The fine arts are there not only brought to perfection, but the manners and the language are polished where the graces reside. These are important advantages that contribute to the happiness of the human race. We admire in the vegetable and animal kingdoms the traces of elegance and beauty in shape, simetry, and mixture of colours; even the most rude and savage nations are not without ideas of beauty, and it is not for nothing that the sight, taste and feeling have such sensibility in comparing, chusing, rejecting, and combining, according as they affect our senses: but it were to be wished that people were not so ready to step beyond the boundaries prescribed for all! Yet who knows whether the excess of which I complain, may not spring from a desire of encreasing the perfection of our being? a desire, which, however it may be bewildered in the days of health and happiness, by fixing on false objects, is however the strongest proof of the Creator's goodness, as under the calamities of life, and at the period of the dissolution of our bodies, every prospect and every hope of happiness is fixed on a better world, when



LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 117

when the reflection of every transgression fills the soul with shame and remorse, and virtue alone imparts consolations which nothing on earth can yield. You, my EMILIA, will easily conceive that the subjects I have here only skimmed over, have afforded me many hours of reflection; and you may likewise conclude, that with these, and the avocations I meet with at my aunt's, no part of my time hangs heavy on my hands.

I shall now lead you to a discovery which affords me a pleasing source of amusement. On Count F.'s estate is a mineral spring, and the countess being recommended to drink the water, occasioned our bestowing two days on a visit thither. My aunt had bespoke Lady B. and Miss R.'s company, and for that of Lord LOVEILL we were indebted to chance. The house and gardens are very fine. The ladies having several petty female affairs to adjust, Miss R. Lord LOVEILL, and myself, were dismiss'd to take a walk. We first rambled all over the house and gardens, where my lord was, indeed, a most agreeable companion, entertaining us with the difference which the national temper of every nation produces in its architecture and decorations of buildings. He gave us a comparative description of the seats and gardens of the English, Italians and French, and two or three he instantly sketch'd out in a very pretty manner. In short, we were so well pleas'd with our walk, that we agreed to range the next day, after breakfast, through the village and the neighbouring fields.

Two

Two delightful days were they to me. The country air, the fine prospects, the tranquillity, the beautiful appearance of nature, the creator's bounty in the meadows and fields of corn, the industry of the peasants—With what tender emotions did my eyes fix on these objects! How many past occurrences did they bring to my mind! How many fervent wishes did I pour forth for a blessing on the labours of my tenants, and for the return of my aunt R.! You know, my dearest EMILIA, that my countenance always expresses the feelings of my heart. I must have been extremely affected, for the accent of my voice was in unison with my soul. But Lord Lovell almost frightened me, by eagerly looking at me, then suddenly seizing my hand, and saying in English, Good God! should love once heave this breast, and take place of those tender expressions in that countenance, how blest'd would be the mortal that——

My confusion, and the fear he excited in me, being now no less visible than my former emotions, he dropp'd his passionate exclamation, respectfully drew back his hand, and strove, by his whole deportment, to moderate the impression he had made on me by the impetuosity of his temper.

We entered the principal street of the village; but we had scarce got half way through it, when we were obliged to make way for a cart that came behind us, in which we perceived a woman with three young children. The moving dejection which appeared in the mother's

mother's countenance, the wan meagre appearance of the children, and the cleanly but mean cloathing of them all, sufficiently express'd the poverty and affliction of this small family. I felt my heart affected: the idea of their indigence, and the desire of relieving them, were equally strong. Glad to see them alight at the inn, I was not long in resolving what to do; but saying that I had some knowledge of the woman, and wanted to speak a few words to her, I desired Lord Lovell to entertain Miss R. till I return'd; upon which, smiling, he kissed that part of his sleeve on which, in the heat of my forwardness, I had laid my hand. I blush'd, and hasten'd to the poor family.

On my entering the house, I found them all sitting on a bench in the passage. The woman, with her eyes bath'd in tears, drew out of a little bag a silk handkerchief and an apron, which she offered to sell to the landlady, to raise money to pay the man who brought her in his cart. Two of the children at the same time called out piteously for bread and milk. Though I was deeply affected, I had the presence of mind to step up to the poor woman with the cheerful look of an acquaintance, saying, I was glad to see her again. This I did to save her the confusion which a sensible heart is apt to feel at having many witnesses of its affliction, and because the distressed think any mark of respect shewn them by the wealthy, a real favour. I desir'd the landlady to shew me a room where I might speak a word to the good woman alone, and order'd that the children



children should immediately have their supper. While the landlady got ready a room, the poor woman stood with the youngest child in her arms, looking at me, and appearing wild with astonishment. I took her by the hand, and desiring her to step in, follow'd her, leading in the two eldest children. Having oblig'd the trembling mother to be seated, I desir'd her to look on me as a friend, who, as she was in a strange place, intended to relieve her. Unable to speak, she viewed me through her gushing tears, with a look of hope and affliction. I seated myself by her, and reaching out my hand to her, full of concern, I said, You are under a very heavy affliction, both on your own account, and that of your poor children. As I am in easy independent circumstances, and my heart is no stranger to the duties which humanity and religion require, indulge me in the satisfaction of fulfilling those duties, and relieving your distress. I then gave her a little money, which I desir'd her to accept, and to acquaint me with the place of her abode.

The good woman sliding from her chair on her knees, exclaim'd, with the most affecting emotion, O God! what a generous heart hast thou brought here to relieve me! The two biggest children flying to their mother, threw themselves about her neck, and began to weep over her. I embrac'd her, helped her to rise, caress'd her children, and desir'd her to be calm and easy. Nobody here but myself, said I, shall know your situation, and what passes in your heart. Be assured that I think myself  
very

very happy in being able to serve you; but at present I would only know where you live, and will give you my name. This I immediately wrote with a pencil, and put the paper into her hand.

She told me, that she was returning to her husband at D. after having met with a severe repulse from her brother, with whom she had begg'd to take refuge; and that, if I pleas'd to allow her to give me an account in writing of the several causes which had reduc'd her to distress, she would submit her case to my impartial judgment. She then, casting her eye on the paper I had given her, cry'd, And are you Lady STERNHEIM? What a blessed day is this! The unfortunate Counsellor T. is my husband. If you should mention my name to your aunt, the Countess of L. it may lose me your pity; but, for Heaven's sake, do not condemn me unheard!—This she spoke with folded hands. I readily gave her my promise that I would not, and embracing her and her children, took my leave, desiring her not to say a word about me, but to leave the land-lady in the belief that we were acquainted. At going away, I desired the mistress of the house to let the mother and her little ones have a supper and a good bed, and the next morning provide them with a carriage, and I would take care that she should be paid.

My lord and Miss R. were in the garden belonging to the inn, where I joined them, and thank'd them for their great civility in staying so long for me. My countenance, it seems,

spoke the pleasure of my having done some good; yet were my eyes still red with the tears the above scene of distress had drawn from me. The English nobleman eyed me frequently, and with much earnestness, but during the remainder of our walk scarce spoke a word to me, he conversing solely with Mills R. which was the more agreeable, as it left me at leisure to think of relieving this unhappy family, to the utmost of my power.

You have here, my EMILIA, the interesting discovery I have mentioned, which seems to me like a rich land which I am called to cultivate, which I will do with the utmost zeal, care and assiduity, and the produce will be the good of three poor children; for I hope that their parents will not so far neglect the duties of nature, as to apply my assistance to any other use than the advantage of their innocent babes. If all the purposes of my heart are answered, and things turn out hopefully, I shall rejoice at my staying here; for now I no longer look on the time as lost, as I most sincerely did before this opportunity offered itself. In a few days I shall receive a particular account of the cause of this family's misfortunes, till when I shall not properly know what I have to do. Counsellor T. is very ill, which hinders his wife from writing. We return'd the day before yesterday,

LET-



LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 123

LETTER XII.

*Lord LOVELL to the Lord B. in Paris.*

THOU longest to know how my intrigue goes on. Well, I will tell thee. As there is no doing without a confidant, that honourable post I confer on thee.

Come, let's have none of thy stupid bursts of laughter, at my owning that I have gain'd some ground, which I don't owe so much to contrivance and the masterly strokes of my policy, as to mere accident and chance. With this I am well satisfied; for the history of my life is thereby brought into the predicament of court affairs, where chance is the grand agent: the sum and substance of many a minister's sagacity consisting only in taking advantage of his knowledge of the history of other states, to improve a lucky accident, and then making the rest of the world believe that all is perform'd by his penetration and address. Thou shalt see by and by in what I resemble him, and how I have had the address to improve an unforeseen event, from my knowledge of the passions, and my acquaintance with the female heart.

I was for some days consumedly perplex'd about the means I had best use to gain this lovely girl. Were her sense and virtue no more than what is common, my task had been easy. But as her thoughts and actions are peculiar

culiar to herself, every method I have taken  
 with others would have been lost upon her.  
 Yet she shall be mine, and that with her own  
 consent too; but in order to this, I must gain  
 her confidence, and dispose her inclinations in  
 my favour. The only remaining difficulty  
 will then be, minister like, to improve acci-  
 dental circumstances. This I have endeavoured  
 to do. Knowing that Lady SOPHIA and her  
 aunt were to spend some days at Lady F's, I  
 took care to be of the party, and when there,  
 had the happiness of twice taking a walk with  
 my charmer and Miss R. An opportunity of-  
 fered of introducing my travels. You know  
 that I can see as far into a mill-stone as ano-  
 ther, and that my tongue will run with some  
 mettle for an hour or two. The subject was  
 buildings and gardens, and the young lady  
 delighting in sensible and instructive conversa-  
 tions, I availed myself of her attention to some  
 purpose, and so far rivetted myself into her  
 esteem of my skill, that she kept a design which  
 I hastily drew of a garden in England, while  
 I was giving her a description of it; telling  
 Miss R. that she would keep that paper as a  
 proof that there are gentlemen, who by tra-  
 velling improve themselves and their ac-  
 quaintance. An important step this, which  
 will carry me very far. Let me now have none  
 of thy stupid grins, at seeing me so elated at  
 such a trifle. The young lady is extraordinary  
 in every thing, and I perceive by her questions  
 that she has an inclination to see England,  
 which will forward my cause, without giving

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 175

me the least trouble. The conversation, which turned on different subjects, was kept up with an air of confidence and gaiety; but I took great care not to discover my love, or any particular attention to please her. But soon was I put off my guard, by a change in SOPHIA's voice and countenance. She seemed moved; yet I continued as well as I was able, talking with Miss R. with an air of indifference, but kept a watchful eye on SOPHIA. At length an eminence in the garden afforded us a view of the distant country. We stood still. The enchanting creature directing her looks to a part of the landscape, a beautiful red flush'd in her face and breast, which seemed to beat with unusual rapidity, from a sensation of pleasure, and her whole aspect express'd a fervor of soul that brought tears into her eyes. All the charms I ever saw in the rest of her sex were nothing in comparison with the delightful impression of the sensations diffused over her whole person. Scarce could I restrain my ardent desire to clasp her in my arms; but to be wholly silent was impossible. I seized one of her hands, and trembling with desire, said something to her in English, but, faith, I can't tell what; but certainly the rage of love must have been express'd in my voice; for she was instantly seized with terror, and turned as pale as death. It was then time for me to recover myself, and through the rest of the evening I was so much upon my guard, as to behave with perfect composure. My dove is not yet tame enough to stand the fire of my passion near at hand.



hand. It flamed in my soul all night, and not a wink of sleep could I get. The young lady was perpetually before me, and my hand shut itself, at least, twenty times, with the same ardour with which I had laid hold of hers. I was on the rack, and imagined I had perceived in her love and desire for some absent object: but I vow'd that I would have her at any rate, with or without her consent. Should she conceive a love, a passionate love for me, she may perhaps *shackle* me; but let her be as cold as she will she shall not escape me.

The morning came, and found me like a frantic, amorous fool, open-breasted at the window. In the looking-glass I resembled the devil himself, and might have frightened the timorous young lady from ever having any thing to do with me. Mad at the power she had over me, and resolved to make myself amends, I threw myself on the bed, and sought to rid myself of these new sensations, and to recover my former maxims. I prepared to pursue with patience the rugged way I saw before me; not being able to foresee what might happen in the afternoon. On my coming again into her company I was all gentleness and respect, and the young lady was silent and reserved. After dinner, we young folks were dismissed, while the aunt and the Countess of F. laid their heads together, to consult how they should deliver up SOPHIA to the prince. According to our agreement the day before, we went into the village, and on our coming opposite to the inn where my people were quartered, a small carriage,

carriage, in which was a woman and children, moving slowly before us, hindered our getting forward. My SOPHIA (for she shall be mine) looked wishfully at the woman, reddened, instantly assumed a pensive air, and with a melancholy look followed the carriage, which stopped at the inn, and its passengers came out. SOPHIA could not take her eyes from them; inquietude and concern were painted in her countenance; she looked at me and Miss R. then turned aside. At length, laying her hand on my arm, she said, in a tender and suppliant voice, in English, Pray, my dear lord, be so kind as to entertain Miss R. a few minutes; I would fain exchange a few words with that woman. I stopt and bow'd assent, kissing the place of my coat where she had laid her charming hand. Of this she took notice, and blushing, hasted from me in much disorder. What the deuce, thought I, can SOPHIA have to do with that woman? She may have been formerly her letter-carrier, or a go-between in some private intrigue. Yesterday, after all my tender speeches, the slut was shy; and to-day, she is so reserved, that she will scarce bestow a single look on me; but a beggar's cart, with a bawd in it, passing by, she suddenly changes colour, and then I am her dear lord, on whom she lays her fair hand, affects a moving voice, and suitable looks, in order to be at liberty to talk to that wretch. Well, most willingly would I throw Miss R. into the horse-pond, that I might conceal myself in the inn, and listen to what passes. The latter,

who had followed her with her eyes, now ask'd, What was become of Lady SOPHIA. I only answered, she told me she had something to say to that beggar woman. She shook her head with an apish grin of jealousy, at her acquaintance's superiority of beauty and accomplishments, and hugging herself that there was room for scandal, it may be some good old acquaintance of one of her villages, hissed the snake, looking as if fully inform'd of every thing. I answered, that I would set one of my people to listen, for I knew not what to think of a thing so much out of the way. Accordingly I sent one after her; while I, in the mean time, went hard to work to sound Miss R. and ask'd her what she thought of SOPHIA.

She has an odd mixture of the manners of the citizens and the courtiers, and makes a mighty fuss about delicacy, which she does not know how to keep up to; for does it become a person of fashion to break from a lady and gentleman to—really I am at a loss what to say—to talk to a wretched creature, and perhaps to give her money before hand, to teach her how to gain your heart, without the trouble of laying such a formal siege to it. I made no farther answer than was necessary to keep her in breath, and to prompt her to go on. Now the young lady's genealogy was brought upon the carpet, in which her father and mother were not spared, and abundance of ridicule and flirts were thrown on their incomparable daughter. The particulars I don't remember.



remember, but I had much ado to forbear paying the venomous holder-forth in her own coin. SOPHIA staid away pretty long; but at length she came with a pleasing emotion in her countenance, though her eyes were a little wet, and addressing us with a placid smile, and the sweetest tone of voice, I became more inflam'd than ever, and knew not what to think.

Miss R. gave her an insolent look, at which my goddess was doubtless offended; as she became thoughtful, and did not utter a word till we got home. I immediately went out for intelligence, and my servant informed me, that he found both the landlady and the woman in tears, at the goodness of a young lady to whom the woman was absolutely unknown. She was amaz'd at her accosting her, and followed her with an anxious heart into a room to which she led both her and her children. There the lady spoke to her, begging pardon for her intrusion and offering her relief: she actually gave her money, and finding that she was going to D. where she usually lived, gave the woman her name and residence in writing, assuring her, in the most affectionate manner, of farther supplies, and even directed the landlady to furnish the woman with a coach to carry her and her children home.

On hearing this account, I thought that either my fellow or I must be a fool, and therefore contradicted his whole tale; but he swore that it was exactly true, and I could not help wondering at the girl's extraordinary turn of mind.

mind. Why should she blush and appear confus'd when about to do a good action? Was she afraid that we should have a share with her in this act of humanity?

But this discovery, this accident, will I turn to my own advantage. I will find out this family, and do them good without letting them know any thing about me. But depend upon it, I'll not take a step that SOPHIA shall not be acquainted with. Through my liberality on this occasion, I shall assimilate myself to her character, and as pity and humanity always imply tenderness of disposition, she must necessarily conceive an esteem and regard for him, who without making a merit of it, contributes to the happiness of a poor family, and it will not be long before I shall be able to tell her, that I am influenced by her noble example, and having gained an inch on her self-love, I will proceed by spans and feet.

She watches me closely when I am engaged in discourse near her; but this little artifice, by which she endeavours to know me thoroughly, I combat with another. I always, when she comes within hearing, say something bright, or break the thread of my discourse, and assume a philosophic phiz. But though her reserve to me abates, it is not yet time to talk of love, for the turn of the scale is still for SEYMOUR. I would fain know how it comes to pass, that this girl in the flower of her age and health, can prefer that pale dull mortal to a young fellow of my shape, complexion

plexion and sprightliness; and why she watches his sudden unmeaning looks, while at the same time she avoids mine, which are so full of life and expression. Is it owing to the coldness of her constitution? This we shall see at the ball, for which preparations are making, where nothing will be omitted that can rouse the most torpid to life and joy. Thy friend shall join in the task of intoxicating her with pleasure, and then let me alone for preventing a relapse.

---

L E T T E R XIII.

*The Lord LOVEHILL to his friend the Lord B.*

I NOW write to thee to give vent to the joy of my heart, which I dare not here reveal to any body. But I am delighted to see that all the preparations made to please the prince, have turned out only to drive the beautiful timorous bird into the net I had concealed. Count F. who on this occasion was the principal fowler, gave lately, at his seat, a very splendid entertainment to all the nobility, and we were to appear in the habits of peasants.

We assembled in the afternoon, and most excellently did our rustic dresses shew the advantage which natural graces have over bor-



rowed ornaments. How many of them, had they been furnished with a spade or a plough, might have been really taken for the boobies they personated; and among the ladies were more than one, who, with a basket of fowls, or a milk-pail on her head, would not have had the least appearance of nobility or breeding. I was a Scotch peasant, and gave to the bold and resolute character of the Highlander, my natural elegance, without deviating from what I represented. But that enchantress SOPHIA, in her disguise, was nature in its beautiful simplicity, and every feature expressed rural hilarity, with its attendant innocence. She was in a clear blue taffata, striped with black, which seemed to improve her fine shape, and to shew that she did not stand in need of any artificial ornament. Every motion was accompanied with an inimitable charm, which excited envy or desire, according to the difference of the sex. Her hair, divided into tresses, and tied up with ribbons, for fear it should fall down to the ground, gave me the idea of seeing her one day in the state of the EVE of Milton, when I shall be her ADAM. She was very lively, and conversed, in a most graceful manner, with all the ladies. Her aunt and the Countess F. loaded her with compliments, to keep up her spirits till the prince's arrival, in order that her complaisance might extend to him.

SEYMOUR felt all the power of her charms; but according to his uncle's political advice, concealed his passion, pretending a fit of the spleen.

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. P33

gleen, and the four looking thoughtfully wander-  
ed, glum and silent, from tree to tree, fol-  
lowed constantly by Miss C, his female pea-  
sant, who attended him like his shadow. As  
for me, it required an Herculean strength to  
bridle in my passions; but I seized every oppor-  
tunity of passing near SOPHIA, and expressing  
my admiration in English, though I sometimes  
put her out of countenance, by catching her  
stealing a look, with all the anxiety of love at  
SEYMOUR. But suddenly she slid through the  
midst of the crowd, and directed her steps to  
the gate of the parson's garden, entered in and  
disappeared. Every body now began to prate  
about her. As for me, I concealed myself near  
the corner of the dairy-house, to observe her  
return. In less than a quarter of an hour she  
made her appearance. The most lovely blush,  
and the most delicate expression of pleasure  
glowed in her face, and with a look of the  
sweetest satisfaction, she kindly thanked several  
of the spectators of the entertainment who gave  
way to her. Never did she appear so charming  
as at that instant; her very walk appeared more  
light and graceful than usual. Every eye was  
fixed on her, which she observing, cast hers on  
the ground, and blushed still more. Almost at  
the same instant appeared the Prince, who pro-  
ceeded through a crowd of people, coming also  
from the parson's garden. The countenances  
of the coquets, prudes, and devotees, all agreed  
in expressing the most malicious suspicions.  
The Prince's transport on seeing SOPHIA, con-  
vered her with confusion; the looks of both  
appeared

appeared a sufficient proof that they had seen each other at the parson's, and the current whispers of the men were, that they were assembled there to celebrate the surrender of a beauty that was looked upon as impregnable. The graceful manner in which she presented some refreshments to the prince; his emotion in rising to come up to her; his eagerness to make her sit by him; the ardour with which he viewed her face and person; the joy of the old Count P. and the pride of her uncle and aunt, which already blazed out, confirmed our conjectures. I was seized with rage, and in the first transport of my passion, took hold of SEYMOUR's arm, to descant on this pretty scene. He, quite beside himself, expressed the most violent contempt for her dissembled virtue; for the impudence with which she exposed herself before all the nobility, and to compleat her shame, did it with a look of triumph. The last stroke of his censure brought me to myself, and I could not help thinking, that considering her behaviour in this light, was entirely inconsistent with her whole character, and was too barefaced: the scene at the inn then came into my mind, which encreasing my doubts, I ordered my dexterous fellow WILL to be called, and promised him twenty pieces to fish out the real truth of what had passed at the parsonage, between the prince and Lady SOPHIA. In an hour's time, of which every minute seemed an age, he brought me word, that she had not so much as seen the prince there; but had only a little talk with the pas-  
tor,



tor, into whose hand she put ten ducats to be distributed among the poor of the village, earnestly desiring him not to mention a word of it to any soul living. The prince came thither after she was gone, and stood a moment, at a distance, to see how the nobility were diverting themselves.

I here began to curse the fanatical jade, who had made us form such false conjectures, when, in reality, she had more generosity than all of us put together. While we were thinking only of pleasure, her heart was open to the poor of the village, whom she resolved should share in the joy to which the day was dedicated: and how is she rewarded for it? Why her character is traduced, in the basest manner, by censures which the most despicable amongst us think themselves justified in making. A fine encouragement to virtue truly! But thou wilt perhaps say, that inward satisfaction is the reward of this good work; but to prove thy mistake, I need only make thee call to mind, that the satisfied air the angelical SOPHIA brought from the parsonage, appeared a proof of her guilt. But how glad was I that I had found her out; for thus I, an arrant villain, was the honestest fellow in the whole company, and had not condemned her in form, till I had searched into the affair; and now am I recompensed for this virtue, with the hopes of taking to my arms this charming creature, pure and spotless: for now nothing but her death, or mine, can prevent my putting in practice all the expedients of my fruitful genius, and employing

playing my whole fortune to give success to my design.

With a triumphant look I hasted back to the company, forbidding WILL to mention a word of his discovery, and promising him, on that condition, to give him a farther reward. Thou wilt say, perhaps, that for the honour of my SOPHIA, I should have communicated what I had heard, and that then my triumph would have been truly noble. But, fair and softly, my lord; I could not proceed so fast in the way of good works, and much less could I have sacrificed all my satisfactions: for what purpose could my discovery have answered, except to have increased my difficulties, as well as those of the prince? Besides, of what amusement should I have deprived myself, if I had interrupted the fine things said on this subject? During my absence an answer made by the prince had confirmed the first suspicions. Count F. having asked him if he had seen Lady SOPHIA in the parson's garden; he answered, Yes; and at the same time fixed his eyes on her. Nobody had now any doubt; and already many of the courtiers shewed her an extraordinary respect, as the future distributor of favours. Count F. his lady, SOPHIA's uncle and aunt, were in the van of these wrong-headed people, and even Lord G. was among them; but in him it appeared somewhat forced. As to SEYMOUR, whose love was wounded; and who imagined that he saw disfigured, that beautiful model of perfection he had admired in Lady SOPHIA, I beheld him so transported with

with rage, that he could scarce conform to the rules of common civility, in dancing a minuet with her. The cold and forbidding air with which he returned the softest and tenderest looks, made her turn her eyes from him; but at the same time spread over her a dejection which gave an inexpressible charm to her inimitable manner of dancing. I was set in a flame, at the visible preference her heart gave to him; but at the same time redoubled my vigilance, in seizing whatever could conduce to accomplish my end. I also perceived that she was displeased at the flattery, and excessive officiousness of the courtiers, on which I only treated her with a natural modest respect; and this succeeded to a miracle. She conversed with me in English, with great sprightliness, on dancing, as the only diversion she loved, and on my praising her performance of the minuet, she wished I could say as much of her in English country dances, which she preferred to the German, on account of the mixture of sprightliness and decency which characterise them, and which will not permit the nymph to forget herself, nor the swain to take any improper liberties. The delight I received from this little bit of chat, acquired an incomparable relish from the visible pain it gave SEYMOUR. The prince, to whom it was as little agreeable, came up to us, on which I withdrew, to tell Count F. that Lady SOPHIA preferred English dances. The music instantly began, and each chose his lass. SOPHIA, who was that of young Count F. was led by him to the middle of the row.

But



But the old count threw all into confusion, by placing her at the head: though much surprized at this, she began the dance with a surprizing lightness of step, and all the proper graces. I had particularly avoided dancing this time, and therefore walked up and down with Lord G. and the prince. The latter minded only Lady SOPHIA, and could not help crying perpetually, Does not she dance like an angel? Lord G. declaring, that an Englishman could perform either the step or the figure better, the prince said he could like to see her dance with an Englishman. I retired to a window, to attend to the choice she should make, and after an interval of rest, the prince desired SOPHIA to oblige him so far as to join in another country dance, and to take for her partner one of the two Englishmen, pointing to us. A graceful curtesy, and her eyes turned to us, expressed her consent. With what an entreating look did she invite the frigid SEYMOUR, to whom Count F. made the first offer, on account of his being nephew to Lord G. but he refused to dance. The blush with which this disappointment deeply tinged SOPHIA's face and bosom, gave way to a benign mien, on her seeing the respectful eagerness with which I offered her my hand; but this, instead of putting an end to my tortures, only encreased them. O SOPHIA, thought I, such sentiments for me would have secured my heart to you, and virtue, forever! but my trouble in wresting you from others abates my fondness, and fills my heart with nothing but desire,

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 139

desire, jealousy, and revenge.—But I suffered nothing of this to appear, and my whole conduct shewed respect. She surpassed herself in dancing, which was attributed to her desire of pleasing the prince; but I alone knew it to be the effect of her offended self-love, which strove by redoubling her gaiety to punish SEYMOUR for his refusal. And indeed he was punished, for his heart laboured under such anguish, that he was glad to vent his complaints to me, and cursed himself for being too sensible of her charms, in spite of the indignation with which she had filled him.

But why did not you dance with her then?

God forbid. I should not have been able to support the struggle it would have caused between my love and contempt, and must have sunk under the former. I laughed at him, and bid him love as I did, and then he would find more satisfaction in it than he would reap from his high flown notions.

I find, said the fool, that you are the happier of the two; but I can't change my nature. A plague on this love, thought I, which makes such miserable dogs of us both! SEYMOUR is because he is ignorant of the innocence and tenderness of the object he adores, and I, who can neither refuse her my esteem nor my love, am a prey to envy and the desire of revenge, and feel no other joy but that of disturbing theirs. I have the devil and all to do! All my past experience, all my address in laying snares are here of no use from the indifference she shews to sensual gratifications. At a ball, where

where most women are coquets, and the best of them filled with the desire of pleasing, SOPHIA'S thoughts run upon doing good. Others are insatuated with the company, and the tumult of the entertainment; they are dazzled with the finery of dress, and softened by music; in short, they are every way exposed to seduction, SOPHIA, in her turn, suffers herself to be moved; but with what? With pity for the poor; and this impression is so strong, that she leaves the company, and all their amusements, to perform a benevolent action. Ah! When this sensibility, so strong and so active, shall be dedicated to pleasure, and exerted in my favour — then, B. then I shall experience the delicate voluptuousness imparted by Venus, when she is attended by the Muses and the Graces! But I must prepare for it, before I can enjoy it. As those enthusiasts who aspire to a personal intercourse with spiritual beings, prepare themselves by fasting and prayer; so must I, to humour this sweet enthusiast, renounce all my favourite pleasures. That is not all, I must let her know that I have adopted her taste. The accidental discovery of my kindness to the family, for which SOPHIA interests herself, has already been of considerable service, and now the business is to surprize her at the counsellor's, where she frequently goes, merely to give instruction to the children, and consolation to the parents; yet all her morality cannot prevent the influence of my guineas; for through these people, I shall find an opportunity of seeing her, and of getting access to her heart. On the



the other hand I shall leave no stone unturned, to prevent that magical sympathy that may arise between her and SEYMOUR, if ever they come to such an explanation, as to know that their souls are in perfect unison. But this I have pretty well obviated; for SEYMOUR's grand instrument in procuring intelligence, is no other than his uncle's secretary who is devoted to me: the news he gives him, is communicated to me, without our ever exchanging a word; for we write to each other with the precaution of hiding our letters behind an old picture. This imp of Lucifer is an admirable blade. However, I must do justice to SEYMOUR, who as much as possible, avoids giving us trouble; for he shuns SOPHIA as one would a serpent, tho' he carefully informs himself of all her motions: but these, by the colours which my new lights give them, are sufficiently equivocal to produce in his prejudiced mind all the effects I could wish. Of the prince I am not in the least afraid; for every step he takes throws him farther from his bias; for SOPHIA is not fond of any thing that princes can give; indeed, she is entirely a new character.

LET.

## LETTER XIV.

*Lord SEYMOUR to Dr. BURTON.*

I AM just come from a splendid and well-contrived entertainment, and since it is impossible for me to sleep, notwithstanding the violent emotions my animal spirits have sustained, I will, at least, endeavour to make myself amends by the tranquility which the conversation of a worthy friend conveys to a troubled mind. Why, O my instructor ! is your experienced wisdom at a loss for the means of fortifying my soul against the force of good impressions, where you have so successfully aimed it against the seductions of bad examples ? I will lay the cause of my inquietude before you, and then you will see how happy a reasonable degree of indifference would render me.

The prime minister gave the nobility, or more properly the prince, under the name of Count F. gave the Lady SOPHIA STERNHEIM, a grand entertainment ; in which the dresses, the music, and the place where it was exhibited, were rural, and perfectly conformable to a country festival. In the midst of a meadow were erected some cottages, and a barn for dancing. The thought, and the execution, transported me during the first two hours, when I was wholly taken up with the elegance

elegance and taste of the festival, and Lady SOPHIA's inexpressible charms. Never, my friend, no never shall I for the future contemplate such a lively image of lovely innocence and pure joy, as that which was afforded us during these two hours, in the elegant and noble figure of SOPHIA! Cursed be the guilty arts that could rob her of that divine character; but it was impossible she should be deceived; it was impossible that it should be the effect of the delirium with which the music and dancing involved her senses. I know what sometimes happens in the like circumstances, that we are insensibly drawn from the path in which we are guided by our moral sentiments: but when she rejected the last admonition of her good genius, when she, some minutes after, hasted to a place agreed upon, to have a secret interview with the prince, and thus exposed herself before every eye, it was then that I felt the pain of dissembling the profound contempt I had conceived for her. But it is necessary for me to inform you, what I mean by the last admonition of her good genius: there was a picture shop where the ladies drew tickets in a lottery; now tell me pray, was it merely by chance, or by a providential interposition, that SOPHIA, drew DAPHNE pursued by APOLLO. The cabal belonging to the prince, seemed disconcerted at this little incident; and I believed their vexation was well-founded; on my observing that she was pleased with the picture, and shewed it to those who surrounded her, talking like a connoisseur on the design and colouring.

My



My joy was inexpressible, and I became confirmed in the opinion, that in the sequel she would imitate DAPHNE. But how dreadfully was I deceived by her false virtue, since a moment after she threw herself into the arms of APOLLO. I saw her walk some time with her worthless aunt, and the Countess of F. attending to the flattery those two procuresses lavished on her. At length I observed her look with a kind of tender thoughtfulness, sometimes on the company, and sometimes at the door which leads into a clergyman's garden: then suddenly she took her resolution, and skimmed with the most graceful agility, through the crowd of spectators, and entered the garden. She did not stay long, but her absence had already excited the attention of the company. But what remarks were made, when they saw her return with a mingled air of confusion and complacency, and on her being soon followed by the prince? That passionate lover could not restrain his joy, and his passion broke out in its full blaze. With what abject complaisance did she present him with sherbet, converse with him, and to please him, dance some English country dances, and that with a spirit which she had before only shewn in the cause of virtue. But, O heavens! How ravishing did she appear! What charms were there in her dancing! All the graces were united in her, as all the furies were assembled in my heart! How distracting was this thought, that I who had adored her virtue, who desired to be united to her, was a witness of the sacrifice she had made  
of

of her innocence, in the face of heaven and earth; and far from shewing the marks of remorse, would you believe it? She behaved with an air of triumph! I now curse SOPHIA and her charms: her image, and my tenderness, are deeply impressed on my heart; yet I hate them both: I hate myself for being too weak to obliterate them.

My uncle, while we were returning from this ball, talked to me like a man whose passions have long been satiated; and like a minister who, thinking nothing of a thousand victims sacrificed to the vices of his prince, must imagine the ruin of a girl of little importance, when she gratifies the passion of a great man, by making him a sacrifice of her honour. O had she been only a girl of the common stamp; if she had only personal charms, and an agreeable address, I could have considered it in the same light as he. But with a soul so noble, with such endowments, that she had a right to the esteem of the whole world, to deliver herself up thus! — Every body concurred to flatter her; but you, who know me, may judge whether I was of the number. Never will I return to court till I feel more tranquility. Indeed I was never fond of the life that is led there, and now I abhor it. I will follow my uncle in his travels; but I hope that my mother will never more desire me to accept of a place at court, or persuade me to marry. SOPHIA has now rendered me averse to both. LOVEILL, the licentious LOVEILL,

also despises her: but he assists in seducing her, and treats her with more respect than ever. What a villain!

---

## LETTER XV.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

COME, my dear EMILIA, for once you shall have a sprightly letter from me. You know my fondness for dancing, and that Count F. was to give us a ball. He has done it, and so much to my satisfaction, that I really take a pleasure in thinking of it. All the dispositions of this truly grand entertainment were entirely conformable to my taste, and agreeable to my notions. It was a mixture of rural simplicity and courtly splendor, so happily blended, that they could not be separated without depriving the one or the other of its principal ornaments. I will try whether, in giving you a description of it, I can make good this character.

Count F. to express his joy for the recovery of his lady, and in acknowledgment of the regard that had been universally shewn her, gave us a ball at his seat, to which she had withdrawn in order to complete her recovery, and where



LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 147

where she had received the visits of all the nobility. We had been invited a week before, and desired to appear in couples, and in the habits of the peasants, it being intended to give us a rural feast. The dresses were various, and each couple was chosen before-hand; that of young Count F. was a shepherd, and I an Alpine shepherdess. The colour of my habit was a clear blue striped with black, and the simplicity of its form was of advantage to my shape: my hair hung in tresses without art, and a straw hat, put on in a careless air, did honour to my character. I am very fond, you know, of the plain artless ways of the country folks, and therefore when I was dressed, cast a glance on my elegant and simple habit; I found it more agreeable to my disposition than to my figure; I felt myself delighted with my country look, and sincerely wished, that after having laid aside that disguise, I might forever preserve in my heart, that innocence, candour, and artless benevolence, which can alone fill it with solid joy. My uncle, my aunt, and Count F. never ceased while we were on the road to commend my dress and appearance. On our reaching the seat, we turned down a vista which led through a delightful meadow, and alighting from the coach, heard the sound of flageolets; several agreeable couple of peasants then appeared, and on our advancing, sometimes a bagpipe, and at others an oaten-reed, or some other instrument of that kind, proclaimed the feast. Wooden benches of a very artless construction

struction were placed under the trees, to serve for seats, and on each side of the walk were erected two pretty cottages, in one of which was milk prepared different ways, and in the other were served refreshments in little earthen basons, with a spoon of the same kind, and wooden trenchers. At the door of this cottage was Lady F. dressed like an hostess, who received every body with the most obliging complaisance. All the count's domestics had laid aside their liveries, and their dress, as well as that of the musicians was agreeable to the rest. There was also a pastry-cook's shop, and a print-shop. Our peasants lead us to the former, and offered us cakes, which on breaking, discovered a piece of lace, a ribbon, or some other pretty trifle. At the other shop we drew a lottery of pictures in miniature. I had for my lot Daphne pursued by Apollo, a charming piece, which seemed to be the best, as it appeared to excite the envy of the other ladies, and I thought I perceived, on this occasion, a change in several countenances.

When all the nobility were assembled, we young folks were desired to assist in serving the ladies of a more advanced age, and the noblemen with refreshments. This employment had a very agreeable effect; but a stranger, who was a spectator, would have had more than one remark to make, on the inquisitive looks, which the ladies cast by stealth at each other. Your friend's heart was open to joy, my feet pressed the verdant sod, I drank milk under

under the shade of a tree, I breathed a pure air, and enjoyed a clear sky: at twenty paces from me ran a limpid brook, and I had the view of well cultivated fields that promis'd an abundant harvest. It seem'd as if the unlimited prospect of the works of nature rendered my sensations more lively, and gave a freer course to my spirits. Escap'd from the narrow inclosure form'd by the walls of a palace, I saw myself transported into my own element. Hence I talk'd more, and with greater gaiety than usual, and was one of the first in mingling in the dances under the trees. All the inhabitants of the village had left their cottages to see us dance; and during an interval of rest, I took a turn with my aunt and the Countess of F. casting my eyes sometimes on the brilliant throng of joyful village courtiers, and sometimes on that of the peasants who were spectators, among whom I perceived several that had a look of poverty and distress. I was affected by this contrast, and at the part these good people took in our pleasures. At the moment when I thought I was least observ'd, I slipp'd into the parsonage garden, which joins to the meadow, and putting into the pastor's hands some money for the poor of the parish, went and rejoin'd the company with a satisfy'd heart. It seems the Lord LOVEILL had watch'd all my steps; for, at my return, I saw him at one of the corners of the dairy-house, with his eyes fix'd on the garden gate: he hasten'd to me, and, with eager and curious looks, talk'd very

H 3

strangely,



strangely, and, I think, made use of some rapturous expressions. This language, join'd to the extraordinary manner in which every body stared at me, made me blush and cast down my eyes; and when I lifted them up, I found myself near a tree, against which the Lord SEYMOUR was leaning with a distracted look. I then thought he might have heard the expressions uttered by the Lord LOVEILL, and that apprehension, I do not know why, ruffled me. But what was my surprize, a moment after, at seeing every body rise on the prince's coming from that very garden door through which I had just passed. The idea that it was possible I might have met him there, seized me in such a manner that I ran to my aunt, as if I had been afraid of his finding me alone. In the mean time, the satisfaction I felt within, helped me to recover myself, and I made my curtesey with a calm air. He viewed, and praised my dress in very lively terms; but, Lady F. by urging me to present him a basin of sherbet, embarrassed me very much; for on my doing it, he insisted on my sitting down on the bench by him, and I was obliged to hear all the strange things he was pleased to say both of me and other people. In the mean time the company separated, and the greatest number began to walk in parties. The prince seeing that I followed them with my eyes, asked if I preferred walking with them; I answered, that I imagined they were going to begin again the dances, and I should be glad to make one among them,

upon

## LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 151

upon which he arose, and conducted me to the others. I applauded myself for this thought, and mingled with the young folks, who were standing all together. They smiled at my eagerness, and all behaved to me with great politeness, except Miss C. who with an affected air turned away her head. I turned also, and perceived the Lords SEYMOUR and LOVELL arm in arm, walking with hasty steps by the side of the brook. Mean while the day declined, and we began supper, which was served up in one of the cottages. It was soon over, for every one was desirous of going to the ball-room, which was built in the form of a barn. No body was more glad to leave the table than I, for in drawing the lots, my adverse fate had placed me next the prince, an honour for which I severely suffered; for he incessantly talked to me in the most extravagant terms, and treated me with all possible marks of respect. This pretended advantage, which I owed entirely to chance \*, made me see the courtiers in a very mean light; for their conduct, with respect to me, seemed to say, that I had acquired a very great merit in their eyes, and therefore none of

\* Few readers need be informed, that Lady Sophia's innocence, and little knowledge of the world, made her attribute to chance, what was done with an express design, in consequence of the plot they had formed against her. None are better acquainted than a court, with the art of producing unforeseen events, in order to flatter, in an artificial manner, the passions of the sovereign.

The German Edition.

them fail'd to lavish their flattery on me, whether well or ill founded, except my Lord SEYMOUR, who did not so much as open his lips. On the contrary, his uncle and the Lord LOVEILL gave me the most delicate praises, and the last especially treated me with a respectful complaisance. He talk'd of dancing with great propriety, and I had reason to admire his talents, and to complain of the abuse he had made of them. I found during the ball that he was not of the general opinion, that it should begin with minuets, which require such grace in the movements, and such exactness in the step, that few can do them justice. The extraordinary applause I receiv'd led my heart to an affectionate remembrance of my parents, who, amidst all the care they took of my education, had me early taught to dance. From the quickness of my growth it was thought I should be very tall, and to such, my father us'd to say, that dancing was a particular advantage, as it communicates to all the motions a peculiar harmony; and that we seldomer see the graces accompany those who are tall, than those of middling size. For this reason he would have me dance every day, and sing my minuets when I was at work with my needle; which, he was of opinion, would insensibly give a natural grace to all my motions. If I could believe the praises lavishly bestow'd on the air and dancing of his daughter, my father's opinion would be justified. It appears to me too, that he had good reason to prefer a genteel



genteel figure to beauty; for I have remark'd, for instance, that the fine features and complexion of Miss B. were much less admir'd than the enchanting graces of the Countess of ZIN. to whom nature, however, has given rather an ordinary person; and among those who seem'd to envy her, were many women of merit. How comes this, EMILIA? Is it because they have a more lively feeling than others, of the advantage which a graceful figure has over beauty; and therefore the more ardently desire to be possess'd of it? Or had this desire its source in the approbation which all the men of distinguish'd merit gave to the amiable countess? However this be, I believe that a proper well founded self-love ought to attach itself to the worship of the Graces; they never withdraw their favours, and time cannot deprive us of them. For my part, had I liv'd in the happy times of Greece, I should have presented on their altars my richest offerings.—But I guess my EMILIA's thoughts, and imagine I see your looks, which seem to say, Is my friend SOPHIA exempt from faults, while she so freely censures those of others? It is not envy that I suspect her of; no, her vanity makes her believe that she has nothing to fear, and the gratitude she feels for having her talent for dancing so well cultivated, is a proof of this. But our security from envy is frequently no virtue, but the effect of an excessive self-love.

Be easy, my dear and severe friend! I am sensible that you are in the right. I was vain, and well satisfy'd with myself; but I did penance for it. I have thought myself amiable; but have not appear'd so in the eyes of him I most wish'd to think me so. I had us'd all my skill in a country dance, and had succeeded so well, that my Lord G. and Lord LOVEILL told the prince that an English woman could not have done better. They at length would have another country dance, with an Englishman for my partner, and propos'd the Lord SEYMOUR: but (would you believe it, EMILIA?) he refus'd it, and that in so uncivil, I might say contemptuous a manner, as struck me to the heart. My pride strove to cure this wound; but what more particularly contributed to calm me, was the gloomy and angry air with which he behav'd to the whole company; for, except to his uncle and the Lord LOVEILL, he spoke to nobody. The latter receiv'd the invitation to dance with me with the most lively eagerness, and I did my best, both to recompence him, and at the same time to shew SEYMOUR, by my gaiety, how little his behaviour had affected me. You who know me, EMILIA, must be sensible that this moment was not the most agreeable to your friend: but my precipitate inclination for him deserv'd chastisement. How could I suffer myself to be so prejudic'd in favour of my Lord SEYMOUR, by the praises of a woman who  
loves

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 166

loves him, as to be unjust to others, and almost to forget the regard due to myself! But I have reason to thank him for having brought me to reflect. I feel myself at present more tranquil and more just. Here is a new reason for congratulating myself on this entertainment; I have discharg'd a duty of benevolence towards my neighbours, and for my own benefit learn'd an important lesson of prudence. Thus I hope my EMILIA is satisfy'd, and that she loves me as much as ever.

LET



## LETTER XVI.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

AT last I have received poor Mrs. T's letter, which she promised me when I first saw her at the inn, and in which she gives me an account of her misfortunes; but it is so long, and the paper so thick, that I cannot inclose it in this I now write: but the extract I will here make of it, and a sketch of my answer, will give you sufficient satisfaction.

She is of a poor but reputable family; her mother, who was of an irreproachable character, and a great œconomist, would not allow her daughters either luxuries or recreations, but obliging them to be constantly employed, continually reminded them of the straitness of her circumstances, which would not permit their living like those who were more plentifully provided for. The children submitted with reluctance. The mother died: Counsellor T. payed his addresses to the second daughter, and easily obtained her, as they knew that his parents had left him a considerable fortune. The young man, to shew his riches, made his wife handsome presents, lived in an expensive manner, visited and entertained a great deal of company; and the young woman, who had hitherto been unacquainted with the enjoyment of

of wealth, indulged her taste for dress, company, and dissipation. She became a mother, their expences encreased, and their fortune was consumed. They contracted debts, and with the money they borrowed, continued to live with the same profusion. Soon the sum they owed became so considerable, that their creditors losing all patience, payed themselves by seizing on the house and furniture. The habit of enjoying the luxuries of the table, and a fondness for dress, compleated their ruin. The income of his office was spent in the first months of the year, and the remainder was passed in care and want. The husband could not now gratify his vanity, nor the wife her fondness of ease: the one had neither the will, nor the other the wisdom to live within their income. They sought for benefactors; some they found; but soon they withheld their assistance. Their refusal imbittered Mr. T's mind, and he loaded with reproaches those whom he had found his friends; this they resented, and to be revenged on him, caused him to be deprived of his employment. Having thus lost every means of support, distress and despair became their portion, which was aggravated by their having six children. All their relations refused to assist them, and the extremity of their distress frequently compelling them to commit little mean actions to obtain subsistence, they at length became objects of hatred and contempt. They were in this situation when I came to know them, and offered them my assistance.

I began with furnishing them with money, cloaths, and the necessaries of life: but I plainly see that this will be of little use without plucking up the evil by the root, by removing their false notions of honour and happiness. I am employed in forming a plan for their conduct, and desire Mr. BR. your worthy husband, to perfect it: for I am convinced that the experience and discernment of a girl of twenty years of age, is not sufficient to enable her to furnish a right rule of conduct for this family. In those I venture to give them, you, my dear EMILIA, will recollect many drawn from the writings that were used in my education, and which I have endeavoured to adapt to their circumstances. But it is difficult for the rich to give to those who are not so, such advice as they will relish; for the latter always doubt the sincerity of the moralist, and when they exhort them to use industry, moderation, and oeconomy, suspect that they are weary of relieving them, and this idea is sufficient to destroy the effect of the wisest maxims.

Some days of distraction have prevented my continuing this letter, but not my employing myself about Mr. T. Would to God I was able to enrich him, and had nothing more to do, than to entreat him to make a good use of the money. The welfare of that family has cost me more than if I had given them half my estate. For their sakes I have acted contrary to my principles. The counsellor earnestly solicited



solicited me to procure him another employment, by engaging my uncle to speak to the prince in his behalf : but on my acquainting him with the counsellor's request, he answered, that he could not make use of the favour he began to be in with the prince, for any other purpose than for the advantage of his children, and his great concern now was to gain his cause. On my appearing dejected at this refusal, my aunt said, that I should seize the first opportunity of speaking to the prince myself, and you will see, added she, that he is inclined to be generous, provided the person proposed to him be worthy of his favour, and in that case you have no reason to fear a refusal.

After dinner the Count and Countess of F. paying us a visit, I addressed myself to them, and desired them to solicit the prince in favour of this poor family ; but they told me that nobody could obtain that favour more easily than I, since it would be the first favour I had asked of him ; besides, it would be granted, on account of the rarity of the thing ; a young lady of my age, being never known to interest herself so warmly in behalf of the unhappy, and this new instance of the tenderness of my disposition, would encrease his highness's esteem for me. I was sorry to find that none would concur with me in this good work. The thought of addressing myself to the prince gave me pain ; indeed I could depend on my success, for I had too well perceived his inclination for me ; but that was the very thing  
that

that caused my irresolution. I was willing to treat him with the greatest reserve, and to keep him at a distance; but instead of that, my solicitation, his favours, and my gratitude, would draw me nearer to him, and expose me to fresh compliments, and fresh declarations. For some time I struggled with myself; but on the fourth day having visited the incomfortable family, and seen the parents rejoicing in my favours, but the house still in want of many necessaries, and filled with six children, one very young, and the others fit for instruction, all my ideas in relation to myself became weakened. The delicacies of self-love, said I, ought surely to give way to the duty of assisting those like myself, whom I find still suffering; and can the vexation the prince's growing passion gives me, efface from my heart the joy reflected from that of this family? I am sure of procuring him an employment, for they have warranted my success. On the other hand, I am certain that the prince cannot hurt me, without my own consent. I then fixed my resolution, and executed it the next day at the Princess of W's, where I was obliged to sing and play. The prince seemed quite in raptures, and repeatedly desiring me to walk with him in the saloon, I at last complied. You may guess that he said some fine things on the sweetness of my voice, and the lightness of my fingers, and that I returned his praises with very modest answers; but when he came to express his wishes that it was in his power to prove

prove his esteem otherwise than by words, I told him that being convinced of his noble manner of thinking, I presumed to implore his favour for an unhappy family, who stood greatly in need of the assistance of the father of his country, and who appeared to me to be worthy of obtaining it.

He stopped, and giving me a lively and tender look, said, Pray, what is this family? What can I do for them? I then painted in a few words, but clearly, and in as affecting a manner as I was able, the distress in which the counsellor and his children were plunged, and besought him, for their sake, to provide for their father, who had expiated his imprudence by his long sufferings. He promised that he would; commended my charitable zeal; and added, that it afforded him a real satisfaction to be able to relieve the unfortunate; but that he plainly perceived that all those who were about him were governed by private interest, that therefore I would sensibly oblige him, by offering him new objects on whom he might exercise his beneficence.

I assured him, that I would not abuse his goodness, and in two words renewed my petition. He took my hand, pressed it between both his, and cried with an air of emotion, I promise you, my dear zealous intercessor, that all the wishes of your heart shall be fulfilled, as soon as I find that you think favourable of me.

At



At this moment I almost hated my compassionate heart, and the family that had inspired it with pity; for the prince looked at me in the most expressive manner, and when I would have withdrawn my hand, held it fast, and raised it to his breast: Yes, repeated he, I will make use of every means to obtain your favourable thoughts.

This he spoke so loud, and with such an ardent and disordered look, as drew many eyes upon us. I was seized with a trembling, and snatching my hand from between his, said, with a hesitating voice, that I could not avoid having a good opinion of a prince so disposed to bestow favours on an unfortunate subject; at the same time making him a low courtesy, went in great confusion, and seated myself behind my aunt's chair. The prince, it seems, followed me with his eyes, and threatened me with his finger. Let him threaten if he will, never more will I walk with him, and when I thank him for his favour, it shall only be in the great circle, which at court is always formed round him at his first appearance.

Attention sat visible in every face, and never did I hear at the card table such complaints of the carelessness of the players. I perceived that the prince and I were the cause, and found it very difficult to get over my confusion. In Lord Lovell's looks there was something gloomy; he seemed to view me with concern, and his lips moved as if he was talking with great agitation to himself. He walked up to the table  
where

where my aunt was at play, just at the moment when she cried, SOPHIA, you have been certainly speaking to the prince in favour of poor Counsellor T. for I see that you are moved.

Never did I love my aunt better than at this moment, when she gave me an opportunity of telling the whole company the subject of our conversation. I therefore cheerfully answered, Yes, my solicitations have been attended with the most favourable success. Lord LOVBILL's gloom instantly vanished; yet he preserved a thoughtful but serene look; the others, by their gestures, or their words, expressed their approbation. But how does my EMILIA think it was with me, when undressing myself after the assembly, I went in a sedan to Counsellor T's, who lives at no great distance from us. I was willing to give the good people a peaceful night, by letting them know the favour the prince had promised to grant them. I had there seated myself in a window, which looks into a little street. The parents and their children were assembled round me. The husband, by my desire, had seated himself by my side, and with one hand I drew the wife to me, saying to both, Soon, my dear friends, I shall see here none but satisfied looks, the prince has promised the counsellor a post, and to give his assistance to the rest of the family.

The mother, and the two eldest children, fell on their knees, and burst into exclamations of gratitude and joy. At the instant we heard somebody rap at the window, which the counsellor

fellor hastily opening, a purse of money, to the amazement of us all, was thrown in, and fell heavily on the floor. I hastily put my head out of the window, and distinctly heard the voice of my Lord LOVEILL, who said in English, Thank God, I have done some good, though on account of my gaiety I am esteemed a rake!

I must confess, that I was moved both by the action and the words; and my first thought was, perhaps the Lord SEYMOUR is neither so good, nor the Lord LOVEILL so bad as he is thought. Mrs. T. had run to the house door, and called out, Who is there? But he hastily flew away. On opening the purse there were found fifty carolines. You may guess the joy this sight gave both the father, mother, and children; all wept, and took it in their hands by turns: they were almost ready to kiss the gold, and to press it to their hearts. I there saw the difference between the effect of expectation and actual possession: the prospect of an employment had given them great joy, but it was allayed by fear and distrust: while the fifty carolines which they handled, counted, and grasped in their hands, filled the whole family with transport. They asked me how they should employ that sum. I tenderly answered, my dear friends, take as much care of it as if you had acquired it by much labour, or as if it was the remainder of your fortune; for we cannot yet know when, and in what manner the prince will perform his promise. I then left them,  
and



LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 165

and returned home very well pleased with my day's work.

I had by my solicitations fulfilled a duty of humanity, by inducing the prince to exert his beneficence, while others solicit him for gifts, which only tend to the gratification of luxury and voluptuousness. I had filled the hearts of the distressed with gladness; and had the satisfaction of being witness to a good action done by a man, whom people thought incapable of it. For with what speed had the Lord LOVEILL seized an opportunity of doing good? He by accident hears at my aunt's card-table, of a family worthy of compassion; he immediately makes enquiries, and the same evening, like a true Englishman, conveys to them a generous supply.

Little did he think that I was there; but that I was at supper at my uncle's, or else he would not have spoken to himself in English. In company I have often heard him utter good sentiments; but I have taken them for the hypocritical language of an artful, wicked man. At present it is impossible that I should suppose this in a good action, performed in such a manner as to be concealed from the whole world. Oh, should he obtain a taste for virtue, and to it consecrate his abilities and his knowledge, he will be one of the most worthy men I know!

I cannot now help shewing him my esteem, since he has proved himself worthy of it. Never could his respect, his praises, his wit,  
obtain

obtain my favourable opinion. It often happens, that by external attractions we obtain the homage of a vile and debauched man; but how despicable is the woman, whose vanity is pleased with it, and she weakly thinks she owes him her gratitude! But, never will I profane my esteem: it is a tribute which shall only be paid to merit.

It is now proper to inform you, that when the counsellor's family has received a fixed revenue, my whole plan, with respect to them, must be new cast; I desire that your husband, as a wise man, acquainted with every class of moral duties, will form the model, and beg he would use dispatch. Now, my dear EMILIA, as sleep is weighing down my eye-lids, I wish you a good night.

LET.

LETTER XVII.

*Lady SOPHIA to Mrs. T.*

I Thank you, madam, for the pleasure your confidence has given me, and, in return, I assure you of my real friendship, and unwearied readiness to serve you.

I informed you in my last visit, that the prince has been graciously pleased to comply with Mr. T's request. I need not tell you, how much I am rejoiced at the thought of soon seeing you freed from the anxieties under which you have laboured; may I be permitted also to say, that my joy is accompanied with the wish that you will make use of your endeavours to render your happiness *durable*, both for your own sake, and that of your children. The comparison between that you formerly knew, with the years of unhappiness which followed, may serve for the foundation of a new plan of conduct, directed by prudence. The Lord LOVEILL's present has enabled you to buy the cloaths and furniture you wanted, so that the whole produce of your income may be entirely applied to your support, and the education of your children.

My years being unequal to the task of forming a plan for this purpose, I have begged the  
assistance



assistance of a clergyman of my acquaintance, who has favoured me with the following :

From the informations I have received, the three eldest children are capable of attending to the voice of reason ; therefore inform them that God has appointed for us two kinds of happiness, one of which is eternal, and can be only obtained by a life of piety and virtue ; the other, which relates to the present life, must be acquired by industry and prudence. Talk to them of the order which God has established in society, by diversifying their stations. Give them a transient view of the classes that are higher and more wealthy than theirs ; and bring back their attention to those who are poorer, and enjoy fewer of the means of happiness. Shew them the inconveniences and advantages of each state, and thus lead them to the exercise of humble gratitude to their Creator, who has placed them in a situation in which they may enjoy happiness, and that this solely depends on their performance of the duties of life. Make them sensible that those of religion and virtue are as binding to the prince, as to the lowest of mankind.

The duty of those who hold the first rank in a private station, is to render themselves of advantage to society, either by cultivating the sciences, by the discharge of public employments, or by rendering themselves useful by commerce : engage therefore your sons, to perform the duties that lead to eternal felicity, and then to acquire the qualities and knowledge proper

proper to render them useful members of society. Tell them, that nobility is the reward of those, who by their abilities and their virtue, have served their country; that riches are the fruit of labour and industry, and that thus it is, in a great measure, in their power to rise above their equals; since extraordinary abilities, joined to virtue, seldom fail of being the foundation of honour and prosperity.

Tell your daughters that they should join to the duties religion requires, all the accomplishments that can render them valuable and amiable women.

Our hearts and understandings are not subject to the vicissitudes of fortune. We may have a noble soul, though our origin be mean; and a superior mind, without being of high rank: without the lustre of wealth, we may be happy; and by our temper, sense, and personal accomplishments, make a very agreeable figure, without the aid of expensive ornaments; and thus, by our attainments and engaging qualities, obtain a general esteem, the first and surest step to advancement and honour.

After having made them fully sensible of the truth of these principles, lay before them an account of your income, and the use to which you will apply it; that here you have two principal objects, the support of the body by food and raiment, and the improvement of the mind by books, masters, and company. Remind them too, that prudence requires you

to lay by a part of your income, as a provision for unforeseen events.

If we attend only to the voice of nature, and what health requires, and not to the fantastick wants of the imagination, the most simple food will be sufficient, and this may be obtained at a small expence. And since the rich man, after having injured his constitution by a luxurious intemperance, is obliged to have recourse to water and the plainest diet, why should we murmur that our station obliges us, in the midst of health, to be satisfied with mere necessities? As to cloaths, a cheap stuff may be of the same service as the most valuable tissue: the choice of the colour, and the elegance of the make, are the principal things to be consulted in all kinds of dress: a genteel walk, a graceful air, a countenance such as nature made it, sets a value on the plainest cloaths, and gives an advantage, which the expences of the rich, though loaded with ornaments, cannot always procure; and in the opinion of the most sensible people, moderation in those who possess a middling fortune does them as much honour, as the rich endeavour to acquire by all the extravagance of external decorations.

If we are obliged in the furniture of our house, to do without many ornaments and conveniences, we may make ourselves amends, by the highest degree of neatness, and, like the wise Arabians, rejoice that we can be happy without superfluities. Besides, the counsellor's daughters



LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 171

daughters will, in time, contribute to adorn the place, by decorating the walls with their drawings, and the chairs with needle-work. In the mean time, if, notwithstanding this noble submission to your lot, the view of the possessions of the wealthy should lead you to make gloomy comparisons between their situation and yours; stop not at the mere enjoyment of riches, but extend your thoughts to the benefits which arise from their expences to the merchant, the artist, and the tradesman: for though the first thoughts may produce only discontent at your lot, under the other you will possess the satisfaction of a generous mind, which rejoices at the welfare of his neighbour, and the more scanty the share you have in the public happiness, the more noble and praiseworthy will be your joy.

Carefully weigh and examine the capacities of your children, and let none of their talents remain uncultivated: in proportion as you are sparing with respect to every thing relating to external appearance, consecrate your care and expences to every thing that relates to their education. Let your daughters learn drawing, music, some of the foreign languages, and all the works proper for their sex; and let your sons acquire all the knowledge proper for men of a liberal education. Inspire them with a love and taste for reading the most valuable books, particularly those which treat of natural history. It is the duty of a reasonable creature to endeavour to become acquainted with the works

of his Creator, from which we receive so many enjoyments. The works of nature every where display the goodness of the ALMIGHTY; the view and knowledge of them impart to the soul the most pure and refined pleasures, pleasures subject to no accident, and under no human controul. The more your children are charmed with the natural history of the earth we inhabit, the more they are acquainted with its products, their use and beauty, the more gentle will be their dispositions, passions, and desires; the stronger will be their taste and attachments to what is truly beautiful, and the farther will they be from the idea that felicity consists in sensuality and shew.

Let your children also apply themselves to the history of the moral world: the revolutions of states, and the reverses of fortune among the most illustrious persons, will make them see charms in the middle and peaceful rank of life, and doubtless inflame their zeal for virtue, and their eagerness to acquire useful knowledge; for history will convince them, that knowledge, wisdom, and virtue, are the only goods of which neither fortune nor mankind can deprive them.

This very evening, Madam, your children shall receive the books proper to furnish them with these instructions. My heart's best wishes accompany them; may they, in reading these works of the benefactors of society, become enlightened with the rays of truth, and find,

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 173

as I have done from experience, that study is a perpetual source of solid pleasure.

Permit me, madam, to make you one or two requests farther; seek no more to form connections with the friends of the table. Shew to those who have served you in your misfortunes, all the testimonies of gratitude, esteem and friendship, that is their due: be as kind to the unhappy as your abilities will permit; and till your acquaintance is sought by persons of merit, live with your children in a tranquil retirement. The more beauty and accomplishments your daughters acquire as they grow up, the more you ought to keep them at home. The praises of their masters, the wisdom and modesty of their conduct, will give them a reputation that will excite the desire of knowing them. I am sure, madam, that you will soon rejoice at your having followed the advice of your friend. Adieu, madam, I reserve some other particulars for my next visit.

LET



## LETTER XVIII.

*Lord Lovell to his friend at Paris.*

NOW for it, brother, is the word with my dear SOPHIA's countrymen, when disposed to be joyous. As I have spread my English net on German ground, I'll draw it close; for my success is now no longer doubtful. The wings of my bird are already entangled: 'tis true her head and feet are still free, but the other fowlers, who would make her their prey, are driving her into my nets; and what in all this is most wonderful is, that the bird herself will look upon me as her deliverer. What a happy thought was that of dressing myself in her virtues, and imitating her beneficence, without the appearance of wishing to be known! But I was almost too late in putting it in practice, and had like to have let the finest opportunity in the world escape me: but her aunt's tattle set every thing right.

In the last assembly at court a mysterious conversation between the prince and SOPHIA, excited every body's attention. I observed that the sound of her voice, besides its natural sweetness, had something soft and soothing.— While I was endeavouring to discover what she could be saying to him, I saw the prince

seize

seize her hands, and I think he kissed one of them. My head grew dizzy, I flung down the cards, and full of spight, went and leaned against the window: but soon seeing that, filled with confusion, she left him and hastened to her aunt's card-table, I drew near, and she cast upon me an animated and somewhat timorous look. I guess, said her aunt, by your looks, that you have been speaking to the prince in favour of Counsellor T. SOPHIA acknowledged that she had, and that he had promised to take care of him, adding something about his unhappy family. I immediately took the resolution to do something for them the next day, before the prince could fulfil his promise. According to my custom, I went that very evening in my fellow's frock, to the window of Count LOBAU's dining-room, to get intelligence who supped with my charmer; but scarce was I got into the street, when I saw two sedans stop at the door. Two women instantly appeared, and I heard SOPHIA's voice, who said, Go to Counsellor T's. Knowing the house, I flew to my apartment, fetched a purse of money, and going to the counsellor's, threw it into the window at which the lady was sitting; then muttered a few expressions of joy at the good I had done; and when they opened the door I was at a good distance. Surely there was some magic in the words I had uttered, for two days after, going as usual to pay my respects at Count F's, I observed SOPHIA's eyes fixed on me with a countenance expressive of esteem and complacency.

placency; and she began to enter into a conversation with me in English; but as she had come very late, the young Count F. immediately begged her company at cards, and gave her them to cut. She looked about as under some apprehension, and immediately turned up a king, by which she became the prince's partner.

Could I turn up none but this? Said she in a discontented accent; but had she chosen ever so long, she could have turned up none but kings, Count F. having no other in the heap. Her aunt had come late on purpose, when all the other parties were engaged; and the prince entered without the appearance of being expected, and being too polite to take any one's hand, he waited till chance, under the direction of the discreet Count F. should direct who was to be his partner. The French Envoy, and the Countess of F. also joined in the party. I was at Pharaoh, which allowed me sometimes to rise; I then fixed myself behind the prince's chair, and allowed my eyes to speak for me. She on whom they were fixed, had an enchanting grace in all her motions; the prince was so sensible of it, that seeing her fine hands employed in gathering up the cards, he held out his to seize one of her fingers, crying, Is it possible that so many graces should be born at P\*\*! Certainly, Monsieur Le Marquis, France itself cannot produce any thing more lovely.

The Envoy must have been neither a Frenchman nor an Envoy, had he not seconded the



compliment, though he had thought otherwise. But my SOPHIA's vexation appeared as visible as her charms; for I suppose the prince's looks expressed no less love than the sound of his voice. My dear girl shuffled the cards with a dejected look. While she was dealing, I turned about, and on her lifting up her eyes to me, I shewed her a countenance of indulgent melancholy, and then casting an expressive look at the prince, returned to the Pharaoh table, where she could see me playing; I set high, and played with visible distraction, in order to make her believe that the prince's passion had occasioned my confusion, and disregard to my own interest. This could only be attributed to the violence of my love; that was the turn it happily took, and SOPHIA was attentive to all my actions. When they had done, I went up to the table where she had been playing at piquet, at the moment when she was collecting what she had won, which was considerable; but she owed her good fortune less to chance, than to the prince.

This evening, said she, the Counsellor T's children shall have this, and I will tell them, that your highness generously lost it to serve them.

The prince answered with a smile and an air of satisfaction. I now abruptly left the room, fully resolved to watch her going to Counsellor T's, in order to gain admission there, and speak to her. She had perceived me during the whole evening, dejected and agitated by turns, and

and my intrusion into the counsellor's house, might naturally be imputed to my ungovernable passion. During my stay in Germany, I have found, on other occasions, that there prevails here a strong prepossession in favour of the English, which putting the most favourable constructions on our most extravagant actions, considers them as a proof of a great and free soul. By the art of properly seizing the critical moment, I have gained more than I could have done by a whole year spent in sighs and whining. Read the scene I am going to describe: admire my presence of mind, and command of my passions, formerly so unruly, during a close conversation of a full half hour with my Goddess, whom I saw before me in the most attractive form. On her leaving the court, she had returned home, to lay aside her robe and head-dress, and was carried to the counsellor's only in a large cloak and plain cap. Her taking off her head-dress threw her fine auburn locks into some disorder; this, with a close jacket, and the colour which the sight of me, and my conversation, gave her, rendered her charming beyond expression.

When she had been there a few minutes I knocked at the door, and asked softly for Mrs. T. She came, and I told her that I was secretary to my Lord G. who had intrusted me with a present for her family; but I was to place it in Lady SOPHIA's hands, and to talk to her about it. The woman desired me to stay a moment, and then ran to get her husband and

and children out of the room. She then beckoned to me, and I, like a foolish ninny, could scarcely forbear trembling at the very first step within the door; but the anxiety the fair one was in, reminded me of the superiority of a manly spirit, and some remains of confusion seemed to apologize for my intrusion. Before she could recover from her surprise at seeing me, I was at her feet, and made, in English, some warm excuses for the surprise and fear into which I had thrown her; but added, It is impossible for me to live without professing the most respectful, and at the same time the most ardent love; and since my Lord G. has forbid my making frequent visits at your uncle's, and I have seen others have the boldness to entertain you with their passion, I have been ambitious of obtaining the liberty of telling you, that being a witness of your virtues, I cannot help admiring so extraordinary a character. You alone have made me feel the truth of that maxim of one of the ancients, that if Virtue was to appear visible to human beings, none of them could resist the force of her charms. Yes, I consider this house as her temple; I come here to pay my homage at the feet of her who has made me know her in all her beauty. I am come hither, to declare that I did not think myself worthy of mentioning my love, till I had conformed myself to her example, and become worthy of her, by imitating her perfections. My sudden appearance, and the warmth with which I expressed myself, had in-



a manner confounded, and at first ruffled her; but the word *Virtue*, which I took care to pronounce several times with particular emphasis, was the charm with which I appeased her resentment, and procured all the attention that was necessary to make me gain over her vanity to my interest. The philosopher *PLATO*, and the virtue which appeared visibly by degrees, dispersed the clouds which hung on her brow; and in her eyes, which were cast down, I could discover the expression of a delicate pride. I was satisfied with this remark, and concluded my speech, which had taken a very tender turn, by repeating my excuses.

She said, with a somewhat tremulous voice, that she owned both my appearance and discourse had been very unexpected, and that she could have wished that the sentiments I professed to have entertained for her had prevented my surprizing her in a strange house.

I made some tender protestations, and my face expressed the fear of my having offended her. My lord, said she, giving me a look of inquietude, you are the first man that has talked to me of love, and with whom I have been alone; and both give me pain. I beg therefore you would leave me; I shall consider your retiring as a proof of the esteem you pretend to have for my character.

Pretend! O *SOPHIA*, were my sentiments only feigned, I should have had the prudence to avoid your anger! Love and despair have rashly brought me hither: say that you for-

give

LADY SOPHIA STEINHEIM § 18 F

give me, and that you do not reject my sincere  
adoration.

No, my lord, never shall I reject the real  
esteem of a worthy man; but I repeat it, if I  
have obtained yours, leave me.

I seized one of her hands, which I kissed  
with a tender ardour. Adorable creature! An-  
gelic maid! I cried I, I am the first man that has  
spoken to thee of love, oh may I be the first  
that has made thee feel it!

SEYMOUR then came into my thoughts: it  
was time for me to retire; I left my purse at  
the door, and looking back, desired her to give  
it to the family.

She followed me with her eyes, which had a  
look of goodness. Since that time I have seen  
her twice in company, but took care to observe  
a respectful distance; dropping seasonably a  
few tender expressions, and some words ex-  
pressive of my sufferings; and, besides, when  
she either hears or sees me, I take care to be-  
have with the utmost prudence.

I know from my Lord G. that at court all  
imaginable measures are taken to gain over her  
understanding; for, as to her heart, they al-  
ready think themselves sure of it, because she  
is fond of doing good, and the prince is willing  
to oblige her in every thing she desires.

All the talk before her continually turns on love  
and gallantry. But nothing can be more fa-  
vourable to my views, than this method of  
proceeding; for the more they exert their en-  
deavours to destroy her ideas of virtue and ho-

nour,

nour, the more will her female obstinacy make her steady to her principles. My Lord G's stoical politeness, and SEYMOUR's suspicious and reserved looks, wound that delicate soul which knows what right it has to the esteem of others; but, on the contrary, I always treat her with the utmost respect. I admire her singular excellence. I hold myself unworthy to speak to her of love, till I have formed myself by her example; and am thus become worthy of her: hence every thing she opposes to their seductions, and even her very virtue and self-love, are in my interest; I shall surprise her in complete armour, and my SOPHIA will be in the case of the knights of yore, who, embarrassed with their gorgeous and heavy coats of mail, became the prey of the conqueror. Say no more of my being so soon satiated with the pious and lovely ORPHISA, notwithstanding all the trouble her conquest had cost me; nor any longer imagine that the scene with this immaculate nymph will be closed in the same ridiculous manner. Thou art far wide of the mark in my notions of this transcendent creature. A devotee, of lively feelings, has no less extravagant ideas of virtue, than those of my SOPHIA, and there is a satisfaction in driving away all such hobgoblins from the imagination of a pretty woman. But here lies the difference between them. It is from self-love that the devotee ardently strives to avoid torment, and to gain an entrance into Paradise; consequently, it is from



from interest that she is virtuous; that she dreads the torments of the infernal regions, and desires a state of felicity; hence, at bottom, her piety is merely sensual. If, after this, she sacrifices herself to the desires of a lover, it is doubtless from the same principle, to taste the pleasures that spring from love; for it appears, from their descriptions of celestial joys, from their chusing at table the most delicious morsels, and relishing them with a luxurious satisfaction, that the senses have great power over the devotee.

But it is quite otherwise with my lovely moralist, who makes her virtue and happiness consist in doing good to her fellow-creatures. With her neither the delicacies of the table, splendor, diversion, adulation, nor the most flattering respect, can out-balance the pleasures of a benevolent action; and the same motive which leads her to render those objects happy to whom her beneficence extends, will doubtless engage her to invent every day new pleasures for her lover: thus I cannot conceive that one can be ever tired of her. However, I shall soon be able to send you more news, for the plot is ripening apace: the violence of the prince's passion makes them in haste to conclude the comedy, and I am told, that to seduce the lady, nothing but entertainments upon entertainments are proposed.

LETTER

## LETTER XIX.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

COULD you have believed, my dear EMILIA, that the time would ever come when I should repent of my having done good? Yet it is come, and I reproach myself for my too ardent zeal in serving others, and am myself become the victim of it. You saw in my last letter, the difficulties I had to get over in conquering my reluctance to intercede with the prince for Counsellor T's distressed family. You know also the reason of my dislike to it, and the motives which induced me to comply. The consequences of that unhappy step have involved me in distress and perplexity, and have made me thoroughly dissatisfied with myself. This is owing to the behaviour of the prince and Lord LOVEILL. The prince, since that time, has importuned me by his looks and discourse, and went so far, that while we were playing a game at piquet, his exclamations on my charms, and the like nonsense, fixed the attention of the whole court. In the midst of the anger and confusion I was then in, I accidentally cast my eyes on my Lord LOVEILL, who was just come to us from the Pharaoh table, and plainly perceived in his countenance the marks of a violent emotion; then casting a furious look at the

the prince, he went and played like one who scarcely knew what he was about; but I little thought that very night he would fill me with the utmost distress and inquietude. I won a good deal of money of the prince, which was not owing to chance; for I several times perceived that he played ill with a design to lose; but whatever view he proposed to himself in this, my winning gave me no pleasure, and this I made him sensible of, by saying, that I would go that very evening to give the money to Mrs. T's children. LOVEILL must certainly have heard me, and immediately have formed the scheme of watching for the moment when I entered that house. To introduce himself, he made use of a cunning artifice. I had been there but a little while, when he knocked at the door, and asking for Mrs. T. told her, he was Lord G's secretary, and was intrusted with a present which I was to give to her family. The good woman, delighted with the hopes of receiving another considerable present, came and took out of the chamber her husband, her children, and even ROSINA. Before I could know what she was about, she conducted in the pretended secretary; and having just mentioned the commission with which he was intrusted, disappeared. I was so filled with surprize and vexation, at the sight of the Lord LOVEILL, that he had time to kneel before me, and to apologise for his conduct, before I was able to complain of it. When I could recover my voice, I reproached him for his intrusion in a serious



serious manner, and in few words; on which he began to talk of a passion which he had long concealed, of the despair to which he was reduced by Lord G. who had forbid his frequent visits at our house, while he saw others presume to entertain me with their love. My Lord G's prohibition surprised me, and made me thoughtful. My Lord LOVEILL continued to express himself with great warmth, and I recollected the agitations I had observed him under during the whole evening, and this served to encrease my distress. I desired him to leave me, and walked towards towards the door. He opposed my going out, though in a respectful manner; but the sound of his voice, and his looks, expressed such softness, that I was extremely frightened and displeased. At this moment I was out of humour with the sensibility of my heart, and regretted the emotion of humanity which had led me that evening with my card money to that house, and thus exposed me to this distress.

I, however, at length recovered myself, on his entreating me, in the sacred name of virtue, to consent to hear him a moment. I cannot repeat what he said; but recollect that he said little on my exterior form; though much on my character, which he pretended to be well acquainted with, and concluded in an affecting manner, by promising to consecrate his life to virtue and to love.

Fluttered, confused, and dissatisfied both with myself and him, I entreated him, as a proof of  
his

his sincerity, to leave me. He at length went, after repeating his excuses, and left near the door, a heavy purse of money for the poor family.

An unusual weight oppressed my heart; and at that moment the only happiness I wished for was solitude. Mrs. T. coming in, I gave her my lord's present, with my card-money. Her joy relieved me a little; but I left the house with the firm resolution of never entering it again while the Lord LOVEBILL remained in D. At my return, my uncle and aunt were still at play, and I retired to bed. The loss of parents and friends dear to my heart, had made me pass melancholy nights; but till this time, sleepless hours of painful solicitude, and anguish of soul, I had never known; gloomy thoughts on the opposition between my character and my lot, on the contradiction of all my wishes, employed the hours destined for sleep. It had always been my principal care to preserve an irreproachable conduct, yet the Lord LOVEBILL had exposed me to the suspicion of having given him a private meeting. My Lord G. whose esteem, I flattered myself I deserved, forbade his relation to visit me. I desire the friendship of a virtuous man; he shuns me, and I see myself exposed to the pursuit of the prince and Count F. What shall I say of the Lord LOVEBILL? I confess that I am prejudiced in favour of the English; but—Yet why should I prefer the one, and reject the other, before I know them? Certainly I have

have been unjust, and too precipitate. LOVE-ILL is impetuous and inconsiderate ; but is a man of wit and sensibility. His heart cannot surely be corrupt, since he is so ready to do good : he is capable of loving me, and appears to be charmed with my principles. However he passes for a wicked man, and an opinion so generally received cannot be without foundation ; yet virtue still bears some sway in his heart. O EMILIA ! if love should draw him from the path of error ; if I should be destined to conduct him to that of virtue, should I not be obliged to sacrifice my preference of him who never asked it, to him who is the object of this change ? But at present I could wish that my choice was superseded by the arrival of my aunt R. Vain wish ! she is at Florence, and stays to lie-in there. Thus you see that every thing is against me. Add to this, the importunity of young Count F. an union with whom, even though I could like him, would not be agreeable to me, as it would chain me to the court ; for however these fetters were gilt and adorned with flowers, they would not be the less galling and insupportable. I suffer by the thought of depriving any one of the hopes of the happiness it is in my power to procure ; but why will not they condescend to compare their way of thinking with mine ? they would then see the impossibility of making me conform to their measures. My uncle and aunt astonish me. They, who knew my parents, and the education I have received ; they who



who cannot but be convinced that I am steadfastly fixed in my ideas and sentiments, think of decoying me into a surrender of my heart and hand, by the glittering toys of splendor, rank, and diversions! Yet I cannot be angry with them: they desire that I should be happy in their way, and they take all imaginable pains to shew me the court in a most tempting light; even my inclination to benevolent actions, they have mentioned as a motive that deserves my utmost regard. While Count F. imagining that the prince has an extraordinary value for me, would, with pleasure, grant any request I should make, has, I have reason to believe, set some people on applying to me to obtain favours. If they thought by this means to expose me to the greatest temptation to which I could be subject, they were right; for to have the power of doing good, appears to me the only happiness worth wishing for.

Happy was it, that the first request made to me proceeded from vanity, and they desired what they could very well do without. I then said, I had resolved, that I would never more importune the prince, and that had it not been for the extreme distress of the counsellor's family, I should never have done it at all. Indeed, had it been a person really necessitous, who applied to me to speak in his behalf, I should have fallen into a painful perplexity, between my desire to serve another, and my reluctance to lay myself under any obligation to the prince. Yet I must be obliged to speak to him

him of my uncle's law-suit, and I am to do this at a masked ball, for which great preparations are making: invention has been set on the stretch ever since it was first mentioned; both the courtiers and the citizens are invited, and all are determined to distinguish themselves by their habits. I must confess that I am pleased with the plan, because it will not only be a lively representation of the Roman Saturnalia, which may be called the feast of equality; but I promise myself that I shall be entertained with seeing the various effects of fancy, in the choice of dress, in so many persons. The young Count F. my uncle, my aunt, and I, are to personate a band of Spanish musicians, who rove all night about the streets, singing and playing under the windows of some admired Dulcinea. It is a happy thought, and our cloaths, which are to be scarlet and black taffeta, will appear very fine. But my being obliged to make my voice heard before so many people, must destroy all my pleasure; because it is shewing such confidence in ones talent's, and such an odious thirst of praise. But they are resolved to please the prince, who loves to hear me sing, and persuade themselves, that by this means, my uncle will gain his suit. I own I had rather sing before the whole world, than renew the scene of yesterday, when I was forced to sing before him in our garden; to allow him to walk with me, and to hear him all the while talk of his love. He expressed his admiration of my wit, and of my being so mighty

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 191

mighty clever in every thing; and said, that my whole form had thrown his court into such disorder, that he was scarce able to bring business into a right channel, the power of my charms having spared the master as little as his servants.

My going away, said I, will then be the best means of remedying this disorder.

No, that must not be; my court shall not be deprived of its most lovely ornament: You shall make your choice, and render one man happy; and never—never shall you leave D.

I was pleased with his stopping here, which he doubtless did, from his observing that I suddenly looked very grave and pensive; for on his mentioning my making choice of the happy man, he turned to me with such an eager and passionate look, that I was really afraid he was going to make a more full declaration. He asked me in a very tender manner, what made me so very serious? On which, recovering myself as well as I could, I answered with some spirit, that it was the thoughts of my choice, as I did not know any one in D. whom I could fancy.

How, nobody! Then take him who loves you best, and can best prove his love. We then joined the company. Every eye seemed to study the prince's countenance. He behaved with great politeness, and retired soon after, saying to me with a smile, Do not forget my advice,



I talked very seriously to my aunt on the disposition the prince discovered with respect to me, and told her I would not feed any person's love, where I could not return it; therefore I would not sing at the ball, and entreated her to let me return to Sternheim.

She exclaimed at my fantastical notions. I had such strange principles, and was so foolish as to be disgusted at what was no more than mere politeness; but for heaven's sake, and for the sake of her children, I must not refuse to be at the ball; and if any thing happened there that I did not like, she herself would go with me to Sternheim, and stay there the remaining part of the year. I told her that I would put her in mind of her words, and renewed my promise of compliance. Thus this is the last act of tyranny to which complaisance shall make me submit; and immediately after it, I will return to my dear abode at Sternheim. O my dear EMILIA, with what a transport of joy shall I enter that house, where every thing will recall to my mind the virtues of my parents, and every thing invite me to follow their steps! I can neither adopt the virtues nor the vices of the great: the former are too glittering, and the latter too dark. A round of peaceful employments proper to satisfy the mind, and to sooth the heart, is the kind of happiness for which I feel myself born, and that I shall find on my estate. Once that happiness was increased by the company of my EMILIA; but

Pro-

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 193

Providence has called her to exercise other virtues; her friendship remains, and her letters will give me pleasure.

Glad am I that I know the great, and am acquainted with the vanity of all their splendor. From this knowledge I have obtained some advantages: my mind and my taste are improved; their luxuries; their alarming, their tiresome pleasures, will make me find more charms in the noble simplicity, the tranquil delights of my late father's house. I have not found in the world the enjoyments of friendship, for which my heart longed; but it has taught me to set a higher value on that of my EMILIA: I have felt the power of love, but I have also found that virtue has preserved its empire in my heart; and an object that would banish it from thence, shall never possess my tenderness.

Beauty and wit, though I am no stranger to their value, have no influence on me; as little have the tenderest speeches; and less still praises of my person; for then I discover in my admirer only the love of pleasure. By an esteem for the good dispositions of my heart, and by applauding my assiduous endeavours after mental improvements, I may be moved, as it is a sign that the person possesses a soul that is at unison with mine, and is a proof of a real and lasting love: but of this I hear nothing from any one from whom I could wish to hear it. LOVEILL has endeavoured to

assume a similar sound, but not one string of my heart has returned it. Even his love, or whatever it be, only encreases my longing after a tranquil solitude. This day he'nnight brings on the ball; and, perhaps, I shall write my next letter to you, in my closet at Sternheim, at the foot of my mother's picture, the sight of which will invite my pen to entertain you on another subject.

From the time I hope that the God of youth will preserve me and to accomplish the latter, I trust that Venus will provide for her by my means. I shall never permit my love to be flattered by dancing, they flattered themselves that the amusement of a ball would render her more complaisant and accessible; and as she had never seen a masked ball, preparations were made for giving one on the prince's birthday. She was prevailed with to promise to sing, because she and her company were to perform a kind of Spanish music. The prince, however, in intelligence of this, desired Count Lowen to induce her in the satisfaction of providing some other entertainment for the night. He made her a present of a diamond necklace, and it was her uncle and aunt consented to it, and employed themselves in providing their own habits; but two days before the ball, a report spread throughout the court and city, that the prince



LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 195

LETTER XIX.

*The Lord LOVELL to his friend.*

THE comedy of the prince, and my SOPHIA, which I made the subject of my last letter, has, through a romantic freak of my cousin SEYMOUR, assumed such a tragical appearance, that nothing less than the death or flight of the heroine can unravel the plot. From the first, I hope that the God of youth will preserve her; and to accomplish the latter, I trust that Venus will provide for her by my means.

As SOPHIA loves dancing, they flattered themselves that the amusement of a ball would render her more compliant and tractable; and as she had never seen a masked ball, preparations were made for giving one on the prince's birth-day. She was prevailed with to promise to sing, because she and her company were to personate a band of Spanish musicians. The prince getting intelligence of this, desired Count LOBAU to indulge him in the satisfaction of providing SOPHIA's dress, that he might make her a present of it, without her knowing it. The uncle and aunt consented to it, and employed themselves in providing their own habits; but two days before the ball, a report spread throughout the court and city, that the

K 2

prince

prince had given jewels to Lady SOPHIA, and that he himself would wear her colours. SEYMOUR, on hearing it, was filled with the utmost rage and indignation; I myself had some doubts, and resolved to watch her more narrowly than ever. Nothing could be more whimsical than their entering the ball-room, headed by the Countess of LOBAU, cloathed like an old beldam, with a lantern, and some scrolls of music. She was followed by old Count F. with a bass viol; LOBAU had a German flute, and SOPHIA, who had a lute, was in the rear. Being drawn up before the prince's box, they began to tune their instruments, the music for the dancing ceased, and my charmer sung an air. She was in crimson trimmed with black taffeta; her fine hair flowed negligently on her shoulders; her breast decently covered, yet rather more shewn than usual; and, in general, she was dressed with much taste, and in a manner that seemed designed to display alternately all her personal charms: they had invented, for instance, very wide sleeves, which falling back while she played on the lute, discovered the lovely proportion of her fine arm; while, an half-mask, discovered the prettiest mouth imaginable, and her self-love, inducing her to sing well, she made us hear the most harmonious strains. SEYMOUR, in a black domino, leaned against the wall viewing her with convulsive emotions. The prince, in a Venetian cloak, gazed on her from his box, with eyes sparkling with hope and

and desire, clapped her singing, came out to dance a minuet with her, and bestowed a profusion of praises on her skill, and the celerity of her fingers. My head began to grow giddy, and I ordered my friend JOHN, the clerk to Lord G's under secretary, to redouble his attention; my blood being in such a ferment as to throw all my thoughts into confusion. However, I made this remark, that the countenance is the proper expression of the soul; for my SOPHIA being unmasked, was always the image of modest beauty, a nobleness and purity of soul shining in her air and looks, that confined the desires she inspired, within the bounds of respect: but now her eye-brows, her temples, and half her cheeks, being concealed by her mask, her soul became invisible; she lost the moral characters by which she was distinguished, and was no more than a fine woman: besides, she owed all her splendor to the prince; she had had the complaisance to sing to please him, though she had long known that he loved her; all this made us consider her as his mistress.

This opinion was confirmed, when, within a quarter of an hour after, the prince appeared in a habit of the same colour as hers, and after a few German dances, came up to her, who stood by her aunt, with whom she was talking, and throwing his arm round her waist, made her run dancing to the other end of the hall. This sight rendered me furious, though I observed that she frequently strove to disengage



gaged herself from his arm; but at every effort, he pressed her more closely to his breast, and at last led her back, when Count F. taking the prince aside, talked very earnestly with him. Soon after a white mask, placed himself close to SOPHIA, who suddenly made a violent motion with her right arm towards her breast, then stretched her left towards the white mask. He escaped in the throng, and she ran through the hall with inconceivable swiftness. I followed the white mask to the corner of a passage where he threw off his habit, and who should it be but SEYMOUR, in his black domino, who flew down stairs, and disappeared, leaving me extremely anxious about what he had said to SOPHIA. JOHN, who did not lose sight of her for a moment, had followed her, and seen her enter a room, where she found her uncle and the Countess of F. where instantly tearing from her head all the jewels with which it was adorned, with the utmost anguish and contempt, she threw them on the floor, and looking at her uncle, cried with the voice of distress, How have I deserved to have my honour and good name sacrificed to the prince's detestable passion?

With trembling hands she untied her mask, tore the lace of her neck and ruffles, and scattered them on the floor. JOHN had slipped into the chamber, and was a witness of all these extravagancies. Soon after the prince came in with Count F. and her aunt, whereupon JOHN concealed himself behind the curtain of the

the

the door, which they took care to lock. The prince fell at her feet, and entreated her in the most tender terms to explain the cause of her terror, she answered with a flood of tears, and endeavoured to go away; but he held her, and renewed his entreaties.

What signifies that humble posture? Will it repair the loss of my reputation? O, aunt, how cruel are you to the child of your sister! — O, my father, to what hands have you entrusted me!

The solemn voice of agony with which she pronounced these words, seemed to move the prince extremely. Her aunt then began: She did not understand one word of her vexation and complaints; but wished to be no longer troubled with her.

Grant me then one last favour, and send me from hence; I shall not be long a trouble to you.

This was said by my SOPHIA, with a flaming voice. A violent trembling had seized her; she leaned upon a chair, and was scarcely able to stand. The prince, with all the tenderness of a lover, endeavoured to calm her, and protested, that there was nothing in the world which his love would not make him do for her.

Oh, it is not in your power, said she, to restore me that peace of which you have deprived me. Pity me, O aunt, pity me, and send me home!

Her trembling increased; at which the prince was so deeply concerned, that he went himself to order a coach to be sent for a physician.

Lady LOBAU had now the barbarity to give SOPHIA some harsh words on account of her behaviour, to which the distressed lady only answered by a torrent of tears; at the same time raising her eyes to heaven, and wringing her hands.

The prince entered the room with the physician, who looked at her with surprise, felt her pulse, and then observed that she was in a violent fever, with strong convulsions; on which the prince earnestly recommended her to his particular care. On its being mentioned that the horses were put to the coach, SOPHIA look'd around her with fresh terror; fell on her knees to the prince, and holding up her hands to him in a supplicating attitude, cried, Oh, if you have really any love for me, let me be carried no where but to my own house.

The prince raised her up, and said, with great emotion, that she might depend on his most sincere respect, and that he had no thought of deceiving her; but only entreated her to keep herself composed, for the doctor himself should accompany her.

Having thrown her handkerchief about her neck, she gave the old gentleman her hand, and left the room with tottering steps. Her aunt stayed, and began to talk about her niece; but the prince silenced her, and said, with anger, That they had all of them deceived him



with respect to the lady's character, and had concurred to mislead him. Then leaving the room, the countess did so too, and JOHN was released from his confinement.

They continued dancing in the ball-room, but not without whispering their remarks on this adventure. Almost all blamed SOPHIA's conduct. "She might be virtuous without making such a racket about her virtue. — Don't they say that the prince was never in love with any woman before her? She might defend her honour in a more prudent manner, without calling the public to be witnesses to it, &c." Others looked upon it as all a farce, and were curious to know how long she would play her part.

As for me, being persuaded that SEYMOUR must have been the cause of her virtue being put into such a violent ferment, I eagerly longed to know what he had been able to say to her, and the impression it had made, in order to regulate my conduct accordingly. I, however, concealed my uneasiness, and laughed and jested with the company, while I waited for JOHN's return; for he had hastened home to watch SEYMOUR.

But imagine, if you can, how greatly I was surprised at hearing from my emissary, that SEYMOUR had just set off in a post-chaise and fix, followed only by a single domestic. What could this mean, if it did not proceed from a concerted scheme. I drew JOHN out of the ball-room, and throwing my mask into

the street, put on his surcoat, to run to the Count LOBAU's, to get, if possible, some intelligence of my actress. Jealously, rage, and love, made such a commotion in my brain, that it would have cost the life of him who had told me she was abroad; but in less than a quarter of an hour a person ran from the house to an apothecary's, and the door being left open, I slipped into the court, and saw a light in SOPHIA's chamber. This gave me comfort; but a thought arose in my mind, that this light might be only a blind. I ventured therefore to go in, and found my way in the dark to her servant's chamber, where a closet-door, which led into SOPHIA's room, being open, I heard her voice. SEYMOUR was therefore gone alone. I thought, for a moment, how to excuse my intrusion, and had the courage to shew myself, and beckon to ROSINA, her maid, to come and speak to me: the girl did not know me; she came out with a candle, shut the door after her, and hastily asked me, Who are you? What do you want?

I made myself known: intreated her, with a respectful earnestness, to inform me how her divine lady did, and begged of her, on my knees, that she would every day inform one of my men. I told her that I had been a witness of the young lady's adorable character, and was ready to offer up my life to serve her; but that having heard that the physician had said something about a fever, I was extremely alarmed.

Highly

Highly pleased was the ABIGAIL to hear from me what had passed that evening; for her lady had done nothing but weep and tremble. I took great care to embellish my account with every thing that might serve to exalt my heroine. When I mentioned the white mask—

Oh! it is that mask (cry'd she, interrupting me) that has made my lady sick; it is he that presumed to say, that she trampled under foot all the laws of honour, in appearing in a habit and with jewels that were to become the price of her virtue: all the masks, added he, will tell you so; they all despise you, and expected a very different conduct from a character like yours, and the education you have received.

And who, cried the girl, was this mask? My mistress don't know; but she says he has a noble and beneficent soul, though his discourse pierced her heart.

Heaven bless, thought I to myself, the beneficent SEYMOUR, for his folly! He is willing to perform good offices for a man of wit. I promis'd the servant to make enquiries who this mask was; I also told her the various opinions of the assembly, adding that I had been her mistress's defender; that I would always defend her at the hazard of my life; and that I only entreated her to let me know what I could do to serve her. ROSINA appeared affected. Girls are delighted at seeing the power of love, and are so charmed at the empire their sex has over ours, that they heartily assist in forming the garland that is to crown our constancy.



fancy. She promised me a second interview the next evening, and I retired in high spirits, turning a hundred projects in my head.

My most important care was now to conceal from the soft-headed SEYMOUR, the heroic effect of his ungentle reproof; but being ignorant of the place of his retreat, I was obliged to have recourse to my guineas, and by virtue of them I prevailed on a clerk of the post-office to deliver to me all the letters directed to Lady SOPHIA STERNHEIM, Count LOBAU, or any of SEYMOUR's and SOPHIA's acquaintance. I am at least very sure, that she can receive none at that house. She was for setting out immediately for Sternheim; but her uncle has declared, that he won't let her go. Her fever continues; she wishes for death, and permits nobody to approach her but the doctor and her maid, who is entirely in my interest. I go there every night, and am obliged to hear a great deal of her lady's virtues—"She is of a very tender disposition, but will never love any one but a husband."

"Do you mind the hint?—Was she never in love?" said I, with an innocent air. No; never did I hear her say a word about it, nor praise one man more than another, except my Lord SEYMOUR, on our first coming hither; but now it is a long while since I heard her say a word about him. I know, my lord, that she esteems you for your beneficence.

I behaved to the creature with great modesty and discretion; and as she, in her lady's name,

forbad

forbad my taking any of the steps I propos'd for the defence of her honour, I cry'd, in a plaintive voice, Will she also reject the offer of my hand? I should act without the consent of Lord G. but no matter, I would hazard every thing to deliver her out of the hands of her unworthy family, and to present her in England to more worthy relations. This string I could not avoid harping on, she herself having begun with it, and I was willing to avail myself of her aversion to D. and her attachment to England, before SEYMOUR's return, who on his being undeceived, would be as extreme in his enthusiastic passion for her, as he was unjust in his contempt. She had formerly praised him; but now she did not so much as mention his name; nor did she take any notice of Lord G. which were evident signs of a glimmering passion. I found out the means of conveying to her short sarcastical letters, in which her sickness, and the scene she had acted at the ball, were ridiculed; in which were also mentioned the little value Lord G. express'd for her; and I did not fail every day to repeat the offer of my hand, leaving it to her choice, to make the marriage public, or to trust to my honour and tenderness. I leave to fate the effect which this mine will produce: It is difficult for me to continue long sneaking about this house without being discovered. I have already done it a fortnight, and had it not been for the preparations that are making at court for the reception of two princes, they would perhaps

perhaps have interrupted my work. JOHN is an admirable fellow; he intends, should it be necessary, to learn the marriage service by heart, and to personate the chaplain to the English Envoy. My last scheme must be attended with success; for with all the lustre of her perfections, she is but—a woman. Her pride is offended, and it is difficult to refuse the pleasure of revenge. No soul but me interests himself in her behalf; she has also found out that I am generous, and she sets a value on the sentiments I discover. “Never could she have believed that she should find herself in such a situation; but she would not render me unhappy: She would not involve any body in her calamity.” My forbearing to intrude so far as to visit her in her chamber, pleases her extremely; that is, perhaps, because she would not chuse to be seen with the colour of the fever.

Within a few days the mine will be sprung, and I have reason to believe that it will succeed. Won't you wish it success?

LET.



## LETTER XXII.

*Lora Lovell to his friend.*

**S**HE is mine, irrecoverably mine, there is not one of my shot that has not taken effect. I stood in need of a devilish deal of cunning to keep up her favourable dispositions, and to hinder others from taking advantage of her weakness. But her guardian angel must either have left her in the lurch, or be a phlegmatic torpid being; for not one single good turn has he done for her. — Did not I tell thee, that I would bring over her very virtue to my interest. I touched her greatness of soul, by offering to sacrifice myself for her. She could not bear to be in my debt, and therefore sacrificed herself to me. Couldst thou believe it? She consented to a private marriage, which was, however, on certain conditions, which none but such an enthusiast would have dreamt of. My satyrical letters had said, that her uncle had resolved to sacrifice her to his lawsuit; which sat the easier on him from the public tattle, that on account of her mother's marrying below herself, she ought not to be treated with the respect due to a real Lady.

Every passion was now set in motion, her virtue, her self-love, her vanity, and I was per-

permitted to read the whole bundle of satirical letters; for I received a packet containing all those libels, with a note written by her own hand, in which she asked me, Whether my observations on her disposition and manner of thinking, were sufficient to convince me of the falsity of those accusations? She was not ignorant, she added, that in England a man of honour, by his marriage, did not expose himself to censure, for only consulting his heart, and the merit of the object beloved. She had no doubt of my generosity, as she had seen several instances of it; that since she was called by her lot to put it to the proof, she accepted of the assistance I offered her, and in return, promised me an eternal esteem and gratitude: that she forelaw all the inconveniences that would attend a public marriage, and should be glad that every thing should be passed over in silence. She only desired me to subscribe to four conditions, the first of which was difficult to accomplish, but was essentially necessary to her peace of mind; that is, of its being performed at her uncle's house, she being resolved not to leave it but with a husband worthy of her. The second was, that I would permit her to make over the income of her estates for three years. The third, that I would conduct her to her uncle Count R. at Florence, to whom she would first declare her marriage: but that as to her relations at D. they were unworthy of her confidence. At the moment of her arrival at Florence, she would be mine without

without reserve, and during the rest of her life, would have no other will but mine. Fourthly, and lastly, she desired me to let her have her chambermaid with her.

I objected to the first article, the impossibility of accomplishing it, without the prince, and my Lord G. being informed of every thing; and said, we would therefore have the ceremony performed in some other secure place. But she replied, that then every thing was over, and she would wait for her destiny. — JOHN now came to my assistance, and two days after I wrote to inform her, that I had gained the envoy's chaplain; and, if she chose, that her chambermaid should speak to him, she might send her the same evening. The girl, in fact, came with a letter written in English, in which my heroine gave the particular reasons that obliged her to consent to a private marriage, and concluded with recommending herself to his prayers. This letter was accompanied with a valuable ring.

That devil JOHN had on the doctor's canonicals, and an ample wig: he talked bad German, but very pathetically, at which the wench seemed to eye him with great edification. I put into her hand a paper, signed by JOHN, and desired her to tell her mistress that the approaching entertainment given by the prince, would afford the most favourable opportunity of accomplishing our design, since, on account of her illness, she would be neither invited nor observed.

Every



## 210. WITH THE HISTORY OF A

Every thing succeeded to my wish; she was highly pleased on reading the paper, to see that I had the complaisance to agree to all her conditions. Why are all good people so shallow, and women so very imprudent, after so many examples of our knavery? But vanity has such dominion over them, that each of them imagines that she has a right to think herself an exception, and believes she is too amiable for any body to desire to deceive her. They, therefore, are obliged to submit to the natural punishment of their folly, while we enjoy in peace, the rewards of our genius. Certainly, if my SOPHIA cannot be an exception, no woman on earth ought to flatter herself with being so. Mean-while her ruin is not yet resolved: if she loves me, and I find in possessing her that variety of pleasures with which I flatter myself, she shall, in earnest, become Lady LOVEILL, and shall render me the father of the most singular race that ever existed, from the mixture of good and evil that will be found in it. It will be happy for my first son, that his mother has such a soft, pious soul; for if she was animated with the same spirit as I, it would be necessary, for the good of society, to strangle the little devil as soon as it was born: but now, instead of this, all the boys in the family will be distinguished by a charming mixture of wit and sensibility. How the deuce came I to treat of this point of matrimonial philosophy. Friend, this is a bad sign; however, I will try it to the utmost.

My

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM, ZET

My virgin made up some medicines, and filled a trunk with linen, and some light cloaths, which JOHN and I carried away in the evening. She wrote a long letter in the high-flown stile of lofty virtue, in which she declared, that she fled with a husband worthy of her, from the danger and guilt that threatened her; that she left to her uncle the produce of her estate during three years, in order that he might make use of it in carrying on his law-suit, and hoped that it would procure greater advantages for his children, than he had obtained for them by his cruelty to her.—Her rich cloaths she left to the parish, to be sold for the use of the poor.—In short, she made two copies of this kind of will, and sent one to the prince, and the other to Lord G.

On the day of the grand entertainment, which was kept in the country, I had taken all my measures for the execution of my schemes. I was at court the whole day, and had shared in all its amusements, till the bustle and confusion becoming disagreeable, I slipped into my chariot, and drove away to Dr. JOHN. I hastened with me into the little saloon of Count LOBAU's garden, where I soon waited, for the first time, with a throbbing heart, for my pretty SOPHIA. At length she came, tottering and leaning on her maid's arm, neatly dressed from head to foot, an assemblage of dignity and graces. She cast an eye towards the door; I hastily ran to meet her; she made a step forward, and I kneeled to her with a real emotion.

of fondness. She gave me her hand, without being able to speak, and the tears flowed from her eyes, though she endeavoured to smile. I could, without the least difficulty, have imitated her embarrassment, for I felt myself a little depressed, and JOHN told me afterwards, that it was high time for me to give him the signal, for had I staid longer he could not have answered for himself, his resolution beginning to fail. But these were only silly qualms, owing to the tender prepossessions of youth being not yet properly subdued.

I pressed my SOPHIA's hand to my breast, saying, with a soft voice, Is this hand, fraught with bliss, mine? this celestial hand, mine? Do you consent to make me happy? She answered, stammering, Yes, laying her left hand on her heart. JOHN observing my signal, came forward, pronounced a short discourse in English, babbled over the marriage service, gave us the benediction, and I—with a triumphant air, lifted up the half-fainting SOPHIA; for the first time pressed her in my arms, and kissed the loveliest lips mine had ever pressed. I then felt an emotion of tenderness which I had never before experienced, and endeavoured to inspire her with courage. She seemed, during some minutes, wrapped in silent amazement: then, with an adorable confidence, reclined her head on my breast, raised it a moment after, and pressing my hand to her bosom, said, My Lord, I have nothing left upon earth but you, and the testimony of my



my own conscience. Heaven will reward you for the consolation you have given me, and this heart will be filled with everlasting gratitude.

I embraced her, and made her all the protestations proper to give her courage. It was then necessary that she should retire with her maid to put on man's cloaths. I did not follow her to her toilette, fearing to trust my passion; and besides, I had no time to lose. We went out of the house without being perceived: the great number of carriages going and coming on account of the entertainment given to the princes, prevented mine being observed, in which I hastily put my lady, and her servant. JOHN, who had quitted his disguise, was her ductor. Having agreed with him that they should put up at a village not far from B. I hastened back to the ball, where nobody had observed my absence. I gayly mingling with the dancers, frisked about, and could not help laughing at seeing, that the prince would not look at the English dances, from his being galled at the remembrance of my SOPHIA.

The tumult, the conjectures, the pursuits of the next day, shall be the subject of another letter. I shall now make an excursion to spend a week with my Lady, who, JOHN writes me word, is very thoughtful, and often observed to be in tears.

LET-

## LETTER XXII.

*Lord SEYMOUR to Dr. BURTON.*

**T**WO months have passed since I wrote to you ; since tormented by doubts and apprehensions, I have sequestered myself from society, till by a mistaken zeal for virtue, I became the most miserable of all human beings. Oh ! If I alone was unhappy, my state would be worthy of envy, when compared with what I now feel ; but I have led the most noble, the best of women to form the most desperate resolution ! I have caused the most dreadful misfortune to befall my adorable SOPHIA ! Nobody, however can inform me of her fate ; but my heart tells me that she is unhappy ; and this thought corrodes the heart which entertains it.—But, alas ! You cannot comprehend my complaints, and I must endeavour to make myself understood. You know how ruffled and dissatisfied I returned from the rural entertainment provided by Count F. and that from thenceforward I resolved to avoid all company. My love was wounded, but not destroyed. I had flattered myself that contempt and absence would produce my cure. I would not even hear the name of SOPHIA mentioned. While I was in this situation, my uncle came to extinguish my passion, by informing me, that on  
the

the anniversary of the prince there would be a masked ball, and that SOPHIA would receive from him her habit and her jewels. He added, that she had certainly sacrificed her virtue to him: she had already solicited him for favours, and had obtained them; besides, the prince had gone in the evening to Count LOBAU's garden, where he had enjoyed the company of his favourite. By this discourse my uncle gained his end: the ardour of my passion vanished with all the blind esteem and hope I had hitherto cherished. But I was not yet entirely indifferent: far from it, my heart was torn by the remembrance of her wit and her virtues. How happy, O my God, cried I, how happy might she have made me, had she but continued faithful to her principles! I will not, however, abandon her, without making her the reproaches she deserves, and this masked ball will afford me a favourable opportunity of executing my design. I provided myself with a double mask, and resolved first to be convinced of the truth of every thing that was said against her.

When the time arrived, SOPHIA entered the hall, led by all the graces; but she wore the diamonds which the jeweller of the court had shewn to my uncle, and she was soon so meanly complaisant as to let her harmonious voice be heard. Ah! had I then the power of depriving her of all her talents, and of the enchanting charms of her person, I should have done it at that instant. Yes, I had rather have  
seen



seen her disfigured, unhappy, or even dead at my feet, than to be a witness of her fall from virtue. I was involved in the most profound melancholy, while she sang and danced minuets with the prince, and some others; but when he threw his arms around her, when he pressed her to his bosom, in the free and indecent dance of their nation--my mute affliction was suddenly kindled into an impetuous flame of rage. I ran out, put on my second mask, and no sooner returned, than I went up to her to load her with the bitterest reproaches. I exclaimed at her having covered herself with disgrace, by her effrontery in having adorned herself with those shameful ornaments presented by the prince; and added, that every body despised her whom they had adored. These words threw her into the most extreme astonishment. Who I—I was all that she could say, at the same time putting one hand to her breast, and with the other endeavouring to take hold of me. But, stupid wretch that I was, I fled without waiting to see the effect produced by what I had said. I hasten'd home, caused six horses to be instantly put to my post-chaise, and followed only by Dick, my old servant, I travelled six hours, without knowing where I was going. At length I stopped at a village, where I excluded myself from all society, and strictly charged Dick not to mention a word of what passed in the world. It is impossible to describe the state of my soul: I was senseless, oppressed, vexed, restless, and yet refused

LADY SOPHIA STERNHEIM. 117

refused to hear any news from D. the only relief my torments required. This unhappy obstinacy was the foundation of the deep-rooted sorrow which will now lead me to the grave; for while I went to conceal the rage of my unconquerable passion in a lonely village, to avoid being present at the prince's triumph, the Lady SOPHIA STERNHEIM opposed him, by the most noble resistance. The violence of her astonishment and grief, at what I had said had almost deprived her of life: at length she found means to escape from her uncle, because he refused to let her return to her own estate. A month after this last event, I came back to D. with a gloomy countenance, and a mind worn out with grief. My uncle received me with paternal goodness, and told me, on mentioning the inquietude I had given him, that he had suspected me of having carried off SOPHIA.

Would to God that you had allowed me to do it! cried I, I should not have been then so unhappy. But, pray, say not a word more about her.

My dear CHARLES, said he, it is however necessary that you should know what has happened. She was strictly virtuous; every thing said against her was false; and now she has disappeared.

At this, my desire of knowing every thing was equal to the fear I had conceived of hearing her mentioned.

VOL. I. L SOPHIA,

SOPHIA, resumed my uncle, who was accused of having received the jewels from the prince, believed that her aunt had caused her own to be re-mounted, and that she lent them to her to wear at the ball; for the habit with which she was dressed, she thought herself in the tradesman's books; her singing at the ball was on her side, a forced complaisance; and in a letter to the prince, she called for a thousand blessings on a white mask, who had revealed to her the base and odious plot which had tarnished her reputation.

O my lord! cried I, I myself wore that white mask! I spoke to her, I made her the most bitter reproaches: but immediately after I hastily fled.

At the ball itself, cried my lord, SOPHIA threw all the prince's jewels at his feet; she returned home in a deplorable situation, and during eight days was extremely ill, and would see nobody. As soon as she was recovered, she earnestly desired to return to Sternheim; but her uncle refused to let her go, and eight days after, while an entertainment was given to the princes of Prussia, she and her chambermaid disappeared. Neither the Count and Countess of LOBAU, who had continued at that entertainment till the morning, nor their servants, who did not rise early, thought of Lady SOPHIA till the hour of dining, when on laying the cloth for the count, they remarked that neither she nor her maid had been seen, and running to her apartment, found in her  
stead



Read several letters : one of them directed to the prince, another to me, and a third to her uncle, in which was enclosed a list of her most valuable apparel, which she had sent to the minister, that it might be sold for the advantage of the poor of the parish. In her letter to the count she expressed, with a proper dignity, and in very moving terms, her complaints against him and his lady ; with the reasons which had obliged her to put herself under the protection of the husband she had chosen, and who had received her hand, before she had left their house. She was going, she said, to reside with him at Count R's, at Florence, whence they should hear from her : mean while she left them for three years, the produce of her estates, to enable them to carry on their law-suit, with more innocence, than their attempt to gain it, by sacrificing her honour. She wrote to the prince, that she fled with a generous husband to deliver herself from the pursuits of a guilty and odious passion ; that she left her uncle the enjoyment of her estates for three years, at the end of which she hoped, from the justice of the sovereign, to enter again into the possession of her rights. In short, she observed to Lord G. my uncle, that his merit had always engaged her respect, and made her desirous of obtaining a share in his esteem ; that it was evident, the circumstances in which she had been placed, had spread a false light on her character and conduct, which prevented his obtaining a just idea of them ; but that she

could, however, assure him, that she had not rendered herself unworthy of his esteem, which she was ambitious of obtaining, and had done nothing to merit his condemnation. She concluded with entreating him to read that letter to his nephew SEYMOUR. He added, that Count LOBAU no sooner discovered that she was fled, than he hastened to the prince, who, astonished at the news, resolved to send every where in search of her, but was persuaded from it by Count F. and they were satisfied with sending a courier to Florence, from whence they had not yet received any news of her.

While my Lord was giving me this account, all the faculties of my soul were suspended; but when he stopped, they were all in motion. My uncle was obliged to hear the most bitter complaints of his barbarous policy, which had prevented my being united to that spotless soul. Her generous behaviour to her uncle; her noble revenge of the most shocking outrage; her remembrance of the poor; her desire of justifying herself to me, wounded my heart. How odious then became my abode in that hated city! With what pain did I restrain my indignation, when I saw her enemies, or when they presumed to mention her to me! For the courageous step she has taken to procure her deliverance, is universally blamed: they seek to degrade her excellencies, and suppose her guilty of faults and ridiculous follies, of which she is utterly incapable. How base and shameful, and yet how common is it to take pleasure

in

in obscuring merit ! A thousand people stoop to the baseness of discovering in a person, distinguished by eminent qualities, the weaknesses of humanity, while there is scarcely to be found an honest heart, who knows how to render a noble and sincere homage to another's superiority.

I dispatched a courier to Florence, and wrote to Count R. the history of his admirable niece; but learnt by his answer, that he was ignorant of her abode, and that all his enquiries after her were fruitless. How did this add to the reproaches I cast on myself for my too precipitate departure ! Why did not I stay to see the effects of my expostulations ?—Is outrage alone sufficient to recover the guilty ?—My heart would be shocked at seeing a suffering being treated ill—Yet a person whom I loved, whom I considered as blinded, I had hastily abused in a manner, that must have wounded her very soul ! But I thought she had voluntarily degraded herself ; that she was unworthy of all regard, and imagined I had a right to treat her thus. Oh ! How barbarous was I to this amiable girl ! At first I had resolved to conceal my love, till the moment in which she was to shew herself in the full lustre of triumphant virtue. SOPHIA proceeded without turning aside in the fair path which lay before her, and because she did not follow my chimerical plan, I assumed to myself the right of punishing her in the most cruel manner. We all presumed to judge, to condemn her ; but how



great, how noble was she, at the very instant when I thought her sunk and debased, she blessed me, who, in the white mask, like a frantic fury, dug in her innocent path an untimely grave.—O what must she think, if she be still alive, of the inconsiderate wretch who has driven her to a precipitate, and doubtless a wretched union; an union which perhaps she already laments, and cannot break! Yet still SOPHIA writes my name—she still desires my esteem! O SOPHIA, in the midst of the distress I have occasioned, thy innocent, thy generous soul would pity my misery, couldst thou but but see in my heart the image of its first hopes, joined to the pangs of its having lost thee!

LOVEILL is returned after an absence of two months. He treats me with great respect; filled with my pains I poured them into his bosom; he laughed at me, and still maintained, that with all his reputation for profligacy, he had done less mischief than I with my zeal for virtue. His wickedness, he said, admonished people to be upon their guard; while the severity of my morals led me to judge of seeming faults, and those which are inevitable, with a severity adapted to increase the obstinacy of the vicious, and to drive the virtuous to despair. How could this truth come from the mouth of LOVEILL! Ah! I feel—I feel that he is in the right! I have been cruel—Yes, I feel that I have—Unhappy that I am, I have rendered the best of women miserable!

O my friend, my instructor, learn a dreadful circumstance of my sorrows, that will imbitter all the hours of my life. JOHN, our clerk, disappeared before SOPHIA's flight, and has not been heard of since. The young lady's chambermaid was once with him, and among his papers has been found part of a letter written by the hand of my SOPHIA, which contains the following words: "I approve of the reasons you alledge for keeping our union secret; only think of the means of our receiving the nuptial benediction; for I am determined not to go till that be performed, though an alliance with an Englishman appears to me preferable to that of any other."

Thus she is become the property of one of the worst men any nation can produce. Oh! cursed be the day when I first saw her!—when I perceived between us a sympathy of souls!—and may the villain into whose arms she has thrown herself, forever perish! What execrable artifices must he have employed! Her affliction must certainly have disordered her brain; since without this the whole is inextricable. But the letters she has left are so worthy of her, so full of sense and spirit!—Adieu, my dear friend, pity your unfortunate friend; it is he whom grief has rendered distracted.

## LETTER XXIII.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

**H**ERE, in a lonely village, unknown to all who see me, and from those that know me concealed, lives your friend. It is here I find myself, after my self-love, and my excessive sensibility, have led me to take a step, which in my days of calm tranquillity, I should have beheld with terror. Oh that I could not say to myself, Oh that my ROSINA, that my Lord LOVELL himself, were not obliged to bear testimony, that affliction and sickness had weakened, and in a manner annihilated all the powers of my soul. Where, oh where, my EMILIA, shall I find a moment's satisfaction and peace in thinking that I have engaged in an intrigue; that I have entered into a clandestine marriage; that I have fled from the house which my second father had assigned for my abode?

'Tis true, in that house I was treated cruelly, and it was impossible for me to stay there with pleasure or confidence. My resentment was certainly not unjust; for was it possible for me to think without terror, of relations who joined in laying snares for my virtue, who

basely



basely strove to sacrifice me to their private interest?

Besides, I had no friend at D. and my heart was averse to the bare idea of seeing again persons who had long been informed of the designs carried on against me at court, and had laughed at my distress and resistance. Yes, nobody was ignorant of them, not even Miss C. whom I believed to be my friend; nobody was so kind and generous as to inform me of them; yet I had never offended them; for I had carefully concealed my sentiments, when I perceived that they would condemn them! But they thought the loss of a girl, the issue of an unequal marriage, of little consequence. Could I, oppressed by the weight of so many offences, whose character was tarnished by my birth, and the loss of my reputation, refuse the only consolation offered me, the esteem and love of my Lord LOVEILL? The distance of the Count and Countess of R. their not answering my last letter, my being refused to set out for my own estate.—In short, my EMILIA, I must confess, that my inclination for England, and the distinguished rank to which the alliance, and the generosity of my lord would raise me, contributed to seduce a mind already prepossessed: I was, however, so prudent, as not to leave the house where I was, without having fixed my lot, by receiving the hand of Lord LOVEILL. I wrote to the prince, to my Lord G. and to my uncle, without naming my spouse; he was, however, so generous, as

to leave this to my choice, though my mentioning him would have made him lose the favour of the minister and the court, because it might be suspected that my Lord G. had promoted our marriage, a suspicion that might have been attended with fatal consequences. I was therefore obliged to be so generous as to be silent with respect to him, for fear of exposing to vexation a man by whom I was beloved, and to whom I was to owe my deliverance. It was sufficient that he could bring over the Ambassador's chaplain to our interest. I wrote to that gentleman all the reasons which obliged me to consent to a private marriage, and my Lord settled a pension upon him, as a recompence for his losing his place, should the minister deprive him of it.

Conducted and supported by the motives I have here alledged, I set out from G. with a chearful heart, attended by only one of my Lord's most faithful servants; for to avoid all suspicion, he was obliged to be present at an entertainment given at court. This was very agreeable to me. I should have trembled and suffered extremely had I sat by the side of my husband; but with ROSINA, I made a happy and tranquil journey to this little village, where I have been a month without my Lord's having found a convenient opportunity of coming to me. I intended to have prosecuted my journey to Florence, and to have waited there for my Lord: but I could not prevail on him to consent to it, and at present he would disen-

gage

page himself from all his connections with Lord G. before he takes me to Count R's, and on his leaving Florence, he will make the best of his way to England.

During these four weeks of solitude, I have kept myself closely confined without any other English book but some belonging to my Lord, which I have not read, because they were testimonies of the disorders produced by corrupt principles and examples. Therefore, on the first cold evening which obliged me to have a fire, I threw them into it; not being able to suffer those book and me to have the same mastery and the same house. The days seemed long; ROSINA asked needle-work for herself from our landlady, and I recovering by degrees the exercise of my mental faculties, turned them on myself, and employed them on reflections on my own destiny. These reflections are all gloomy, from the contrast which has, for a long time subsisted between my inclinations and the circumstances in which I am placed.

Oh that my father had lived to dispose of my hand to some virtuous man whom he approved! My fortune is considerable, and as my husband and I should have imitated the examples of beneficence my parents have set us, the consciousness of a life well spent, and the prospect of the happiness diffused around us, would have crowned my days with a solid and pure felicity. Why did I not attend to the voice which restrained me, when my disturbed mind



refused the solicitations of my uncle and your father? I imagined that my aversion might spring from unjust prejudices, and consented to exchange a peaceful and uniform life for my aunt's confused flutter of vain amusements. You know how I supported them. At last, I learnt, that people had conspired against my virtue and honour, and then that extreme sensibility which I received from nature, was directed entirely to my defence. Oh how often have I learnt to distinguish by their effects, the difference between the sensibility which relates to others, and that which has no other object but ourselves. The latter is lawful, and natural to all human beings; but it is the former alone that is noble; it is that alone which justifies that expression of the holy scriptures, that man is created after the image of his Maker: since this sensibility to the welfare or sufferings of our fellow creatures is the source of that beneficence, which is the only quality that bears a just, though imperfect, impression of the divine image; an impression not only imprinted on all rational beings, but on the lifeless parts of nature; so that the most feeble plant, or blade of grass, by contributing to the nourishment of animals, is according to its sphere, as beneficent as the large tree, that in so many ways of use to us. The least grain of sand, which by its lightness serves to make the earth yield to the labour of the husbandman, as usefully fills its destined place, as the rock, which by its size, fills us with astonishment,

ment, and which serves to fix the foundations of the earth. Do not the animal and vegetable kingdoms offer on all sides the gifts with which they enrich our lives? The entire physical world faithfully discharges these duties, and every spring they are renewed. Man alone degenerates, and effaces that sacred impression, which in us would shine with a much stronger lustre, and in greater beauty, from the various ways in which we are capable of exhibiting it.

Here, my EMILIA, you recollect my father's principles; my melancholy warmly recalls them to my mind, when in the peace of solitude, I turn back to view the path which my sensibility had pointed out to me; a path so far from that into which I have been hurried. Oh! I have failed in one of the duties of beneficence, that of doing good to others, by setting them a good example. Nobody will say that my resolution has been influenced by vexation and despair; but all mothers will make use of my fault to guard their daughters from committing the like error; and each maid will persuade herself, that was she in my situation, she could have found a more lawful and more prudent means of extricating herself than I have discovered. I myself know that I might; but then I did not see it, and nobody condescended to point it out to me.

How unhappy is it, my dear EMILIA, to be reduced to seek for excuses! and how dreadful is it to find none but such as are weak and insufficient! While I was sensible only with  
regard

regard to others, I offended only those cold souls who are void of feeling; and if I carried my notions of beneficence to an extreme, that sensibility justified the excess. But when it had no other object but myself, I offended against prudence; I failed in the social duties of a maid well-born. Oh how dark is this part of my life! With what a gloom is it encompassed! What remains for me, but to raise mine eyes, to keep them fixed on the way before me, and to proceed with courage.

I have owed the first hours of my consolation to my being employed in teaching two poor girls, to work and to think. You know, my EMILIA, how I love to be employed: my reflections, and the use of my pen, made me melancholy. — I could not remedy what was passed, and was obliged to consider whatever was blameable in my conduct, as a natural consequence of my erroneous self-love, and to seek for consolation out of myself, either by endeavouring to render my husband happy, or by continually striving to do all possible good to my fellow-creatures. I made enquiry after the poor of the place, and relieved their distresses. This induced the tender-hearted ROSINA to recommend to me our landlady's two nieces, who are orphans, whom our landlord and his wife do not love, and who make them pay for their subsistence by the harsh treatment they receive. I sent for them, sounded their inclinations, and enquired into what they knew, and of what they were ignorant.



rant. Both of them were willing to be taught by ROSINA, and I shared with her in instructing these young children: the next day they assisted at my toilette, to receive lessons from me, and a fortnight after they served me by turns, while I talked to them of the duties of the stations in which God had thought fit to place them, and also of those which he had been pleased to confer on me. This I did to such purpose, that I brought them to think themselves much happier in being chambermaids, than if they had been ladies, on account of our being obliged to answer for the wealth, and all the advantages we enjoy. Their hopes and desires are otherwise very limited, and the little prospects I lay before each of them suitable to their particular tempers and capacities, give them singular satisfaction, and they imagine that I can read their very thoughts. I pay for their board, have provided new cloaths for them, and purchased every thing necessary for their learning. I assign them hours for writing and accounts, and take no small pains in teaching them to support, with propriety, the characters and situations in which they may be placed. The landlady, and her nieces, consider me as their guardian angel, and did I permit them, would frequently fall on their knees to thank me. How sweet and happy are the hours devoted to these children! and how often do I call to mind those words of a modern author. "Art thou plunged in melancholy, and seest nothing around thee that  
 " can

“ can give thee comfort? Read the Bible;  
 “ strive to eradicate a vice from thy heart;  
 “ or seek to do good to thy fellow-creatures:  
 “ then will thy melancholy disappear.”

Resources as noble as they are infallible!  
 With what pleasure do I take my walks with  
 my pupils, while I entertain them with talking  
 of the goodness of our common Creator! How  
 pure is the joy that fills my heart, when I  
 see their softened eyes lift up towards heaven  
 with sensations of awful respect and gratitude,  
 and at length press my hands, and imprint  
 on them their kisses. In those moments I  
 rejoice even in my flight, since had it not been  
 for that, I should not have found these chil-  
 dren. Besides, you love me, my dear EMILIA,  
 and will doubtless pardon my silence; I will  
 therefore strive, while I have your friendship,  
 not to think myself unhappy.

LET

## LETTER XXIV.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

SINCE the arrival of my lord, my pupils have become twice as dear to me as ever; for the happy hours I passed with them had strengthened my mind, and inspired my heart with courage. My lord is not pleased with the gravity of my disposition; he is in love with nothing but sallies of wit; and my soft and timid tenderness is not the return which his flaming and impetuous love demands. All his sensations are violent, and my burning his looks threw him into a rage. During the three weeks he has staid here, I have not dared to see my scholars: his temper appears extremely unequal; sometimes gay and affectionate; sometimes cold and gloomy: he fixes his eyes on me, sometimes with a smile, and at others with a look of secret discontent. He has required me to give him the reason of the aversion I first felt for him, and the motives of my change. He has even questioned me about my Lord SEYMOUR; and my blushing at hearing his name, produced a look that struck me with terror, and which I cannot describe. On a much more delicate occasion I had perceived that he was jealous of Lord SEYMOUR; thus am I constantly to suffer for others.



others. My Lord loves splendour, and has already made me a present of some valuable ornaments, though I prefer a noble simplicity to all the pomp of dress. God grant that this may be the only point in which we shall differ: but I fear—O EMILIA, pray for me!—My heart is distracted with apprehensions—I will, however, spare no pains, no complaisance to please my husband: but oh, I find, that I must often deviate from the right path, and shall be obliged to change my principles.

I have chosen him; to him I have intrusted my honour, my reputation, my life. I owe him more respect, more submission, than I should owe to a husband whom I had married in other circumstances.

Oh that I were once in my own house in England, and my lord engaged in affairs suitable to the boldness of his character, then I dare hope, that in the midst of his family, his mind would take a more peaceful course; that his pride would change to dignity, his petulance to a noble ardour for praiseworthy actions. That ardour I would endeavour to excite; and since I cannot have the happiness of being an ancient Greek, I will endeavour, at least, to be ranked among the best of the English ladies.

LET.

## LETTER XXV.

*Lord LOVEILL to his friend.*

A Plague of thy predictions. What hast thou to do to interfere in my adventures? "The enchantment will not be durable!" Sayest thou. How the deuce hast thou, with thy shallow capacity, been able to see that at Paris; which I could not see here? But suspend a little the impulses of thy vanity, for thou art not entirely in the right. Thou mentionest satiety, but that is not the affair in question. I have it not, and don't know that I ever shall have that satiety: for many things are wanting to form the idea I had affixed to the possession of her; and yet I can no longer bear the sight of her.—What, not bear the sight of my SOPHIA, my own supposed lady! She whom I have loved five months even to distraction! But her destiny has placed my pleasures; and her inclination, in opposition; and my heart has been buffeted between them. SOPHIA makes no other return to the warm embraces of her lover, than the feeble affection of an insensible wife; and the whole compassion is so lively, whose zeal is so ardent, and so active for mere ideas and phantoms, treats me with a cold salute, interrupted with sighs. What a value have I set on her tenderness, and  
the

the happiness of possessing her ! Proud of my conquest, I looked with contempt upon the Prince and his agents. — With what impatience did I wait for the moment, when I should see her again ! I would have sacrificed horses, postillions, domestics, to hasten my course. My heart leaped with joy on my discovering the village which contained my treasure, and I was very near pistolling the unhappy wretch who did not instantly fly to open the chaise. In five steps I was at the stairs' head, where she stood in a white English dress, majestically beautiful. I embraced her with transport. She welcomed me, stammering, blushing, and turning pale by turns. Her dejection would have rendered me happy, could I have discovered in it one symptom of love ; but an inward anxiety and constraint were visible in all her features. I left her to change my cloathes. At my return I stopped at the door, and it being a little open, saw her sitting in the seat of the window, her arms wrapped in the curtains, all the muscles of her face agitated ; her eyes lift up to the ceiling ; a strong and short respiration slowly moved her lovely bosom, and, in short, her whole frame expressed the image of silent despair. Judge what an impression this must make on me, and what I ought to think of it. My arrival, indeed, might fill her with new and unknown sensations ; but whence this disorder and distress ? She might be a little afraid ; but if she had any love for me, would so violent a conflict have been natural ? I was seized



seized with indignation; I entered the chamber; she changed her attitude, and let her arms and head sink in sadness. I threw myself at her feet, and grasped her knees with my trembling hands.

Smile, Lady SOPHIA, cried I, smile, if you would not have me lose my senses.

A flood of tears gushed from her eyes; my rage encreased, but she put her arm about my neck, and inclined her head on my face.

O, my dear Lord, don't be offended at seeing me still sensible of my misfortunes. Your goodness, I hope, will make me lose the remembrance of them.

Her breath, the motion of her lips, while she spoke, I felt on my cheek, and some of her tears which fell on my face, extinguished my anger, and gave me the sweetest sensation I have enjoyed, during the three weeks I have been with her. I embraced and soothed her; she strove to smile while we were at supper, and during the conversation of the evening; but, sometimes, with all the charms of virgin modesty, turned away her eyes when my looks appeared too ardent.

Attractive creature, how couldst thou cease to be so? How comest thou to let me perceive thy inclination for SEYMOUR?

The following days she strove to appear gay. I had brought her a lute, and she had the complaisance to sing a pretty Italian air of her own composing; in which she besought Venus to make her a present of her girdle, that she might

might retain the object of her tenderness. The thoughts were happy and well expressed, the music well adapted, and her voice so pathetic, that I heard her with the sweetest transport. But this pleasing dream vanished, when I observed that, during the most tender passages, which she sang the best, she did not cast her eyes on me; but declining her head, cast them on the floor, and uttered sighs, which certainly had not me for their object. When she had done, I asked her if this was the first time of her singing that air? No, said she, blushing. This gave birth to several other questions on the time when she began to think favourably of me, and her opinion of SEYMOUR. But curse the frankness of her answers! her confessions broke all the tender bonds that bound me to her. A thousand trifling incidents, and even the pains she took to appear tender and happy, convinced me that I was not the object of her love. A pretty good opinion of my wit, some esteem for my liberality, the pleasure of settling in England, and a cold acknowledgment of the services I had performed for her in delivering her from her relations, and from the prince, were all she felt for me. She had even the imprudence one day, when I asked her what qualities she should like best in me, to paint SEYMOUR feature after feature. In short, she has incessantly intreated me to hasten my departure, and set out on our journey to Florence, which is a certain proof that her mind is more bent  
on

on the gratification of her ambition, than on my happiness. She poisons my sweetest pleasures, by repeating every day this request, to which she has the art of giving all imaginable turns, and has even assured me, that she shall not love me till we arrive in that city. I have said that she poisoned my felicity; but in doing this she has hardened my heart, which was before so weak, as sometimes to reproach me for our false marriage, and to plead her cause against myself.

In the third week of my being with her the evil grew worse. I had given her some English pamphlets, in which pleasure was painted in the most lascivious and flaming colours, in hopes that some sparks might kindle her imagination; but she had no sooner cast her eyes upon them, than her virtue obliged her to condemn them to the flames. The loss of these pamphlets, and the ill success of my design, put me into an ill humour, which she bore with calmness and resignation.

Two days after I went to her toilet just at the time when she was combing her fine locks. Her dishabille was white lawn over a pink lutestring, which sitting close to her fine shape, she appeared ravishingly beautiful. I took her locks, and wrapped them round her waist. She brought to my mind the EVE of MILTON; my imagination was inflamed, and sending her chambermaid out of the room, I desired her instantly to undress, and give me the pleasure of admiring in her the copy of Nature's first  
master-



master-piece. A vivid blush overspread her face, and I received a flat refusal. I insisted; she persisted in refusing me, and, for a long time, defended herself, till my impatience being inflamed, I tore her cloaths from her back, and, against her will, accomplished my purpose. Thou canst not imagine how ill she took this liberty, which, in our circumstances, was of so little consequence. My lord, cried she, you tear my heart, you destroy my tenderness for you. Never can I forgive this want of delicacy! O my God, how have I been blinded!—Thus she exclaimed, while she violently pushed me from her, and the tears streamed down her cheeks. I coolly answered, that she would have shewn more complaisance to the desires of Lord SEYMOUR. I am sure, said she, in the lofty tone of a tragedy Queen, my Lord SEYMOUR would have thought me worthy of a more noble and delicate love.

Didst thou ever see such a fantastical caprice? After dinner I desired her to explain the reason of it, and at the same time extolled her concealed beauties; when she answered, that she should always reject with indignation such praises as she could not obtain without the violation of modesty. Canst thou believe that I can live happily with such a perverse wrong-head? This mixture of wit and folly has entered into her whole character, and has given me a kind of languor and disgust. SOPHIA is no longer her whom I loved, I am therefore no longer obliged to continue what I  
seemed

seemed to be.—She herself has pointed out the way by which I may escape from her chains. Besides, the death of my brother has raised my ideas. Soon, perhaps, it will be necessary for me to return to England, and SEYMOUR may then try his fortune with my widow; for I think she soon will be so; and if that should happen, she will have nobody to blame but herself. Since she thinks herself my wife, is it not her duty to comply with my will in every thing? And has she not violated that duty? And what is worse, does she not love another? It is therefore just and reasonable, that as I am deceived by her ambition and conduct, I should be revenged on her ambition for the affront. It, however, gives me great satisfaction, when I think that I have been the chosen instrument for punishing the baseness of her uncle, the treachery of the prince, and the folly of the rest of his agents. As to SOPHIA, she was to blame to elope with me; it is necessary that she should be sensible of this, and I shall have the merit of bringing her to repentance. For all these exploits I have had the necessary degrees of abilities and address, which I have not ill employed. I have succeeded; and let the others improve by the chastisements they have received.

Know, moreover, that I am become SEYMOUR's confidant. He had sat in a solitary village lamenting the loss of the fair maiden's virtue; while I, laughing at him, kept myself on my guard, and afterwards made him

search for her on the side opposite to that I had made her take. He was desirous of knowing from me, who could be the husband she mentioned in her letters. He had sent couriers to Florence, but I found a way to put a stop to his enquiries, by means of the last letter SOPHIA had written to me at D. for I tore off that part which might have betrayed me, and threw the other piece among Secretary JOHN's papers. His absence had appeared very suspicious, and by my advice, his chamber was ransacked, when this paper being found, raised a strong suspicion of his being the deliverer of the delicate SOPHIA; a discovery which proved, that she had very mean ideas and inclinations, and this for a long time served as a text for all the ladies of quality to preach to their daughters against marrying beneath their rank. SEYMOUR's love, I suppose, is now turned into contempt, and he has put a stop to his couriers,---As for me, I expect one from England, and then thou wilt know, whether I shall come to thee or not.

except sometimes she lifts up her hands towards  
 L.E.T.  
 all day on her knees before a chair, on which  
 My heart is broke---She eats nothing. She is  
 were blind---I don't see now how my lady  
 myself to my Lord SEYMOUR. Al! we both  
 odious marriage. O that I had not address'd  
 part, who persuaded her to consent to this  
 witch---Oh it was I, I myself, who took his  
 prevented his doing ever the same. We both



ACT THE XXVI.

ROSINA to her sister EMILIA.

O Sister, how can I mention the horrible misfortune that has befallen my dear lady. — That monster Lord LOVEILL! — Surely God will punish him; he will, he will! The villain has abandoned her, and set out alone for England! His was a false marriage: a domestic as wicked as his master, in the disguise of a clergyman, performed the ceremony. My hand trembles while I write it: that we might have no doubt of the excess of our misfortune, the abominable wretch himself brought the letter in which my lord took his leave. In that letter he says, my lady did not love him, and that SEYMOUR has always had her heart: that this has extinguished his love, and prevented his being ever the same. What a wretch! Oh it was I, I myself, who took his part, who persuaded her to consent to this odious marriage! O that I had but addressed myself to my Lord SEYMOUR! Ah! we both were blind! — I durst not now see my lady. My heart is broke---She eats nothing. She is all day on her knees before a chair, on which she rests her head, and remains immoveable, except sometimes she lifts up her hands to-

wards heaven, crying, in a dying voice, O my God! my God!

She has shed few tears, and only some yesterday. The first two days I was afraid that we should both lose our senses, and it is a miracle that we did not.

It is two days since I wrote the above, and I again take up my pen. During fifteen days we had heard no mention of my lord; his servant left us, and five days after came this fatal letter, which renders us so unhappy. The hardened monster delivered it to her himself. Having run it over, she became pale and motionless; at length, without uttering a word, she hastily tore the letter, and another paper; threw them on the floor, and pointing to the scattered pieces with one hand, cried to the man, Away! away! in a voice of the most violent distress. At the same time she sunk on her knees, joined her hands, and for above two hours remained silent, and to appearance half dead. It is impossible to describe what I suffered. That God only knows. I kneeled down by her, held her in my arms, and entreated her so long, and with so many tears, to be pacified, that she told me stammering, and in a weak, broken voice, that LOVEILL had abandoned her, that her marriage was a deceit, and that she had nothing to wish for but death. --- She has no thoughts of revenge; it is with you, my dear sister, that she will conceal herself from every eye. You will receive her. My brother, I am sure, will consent to it,

and

and assist her with his advice. We don't know what is become of my lord: his letter of exchange for six hundred carolines has been torn in pieces. All my mistress's money amounts only to three hundred, of which she gives fifty to the poor orphans her pupils, and as many to the poor of the village. Her jewels, and a trunk filled with cloaths, are all we shall take with us. We are so altered by our grief, that you would not know us. My mistress no longer speaks to any body. The brother of the two orphan girls will accompany us half way. We are coming, my dear sister, to seek consolation from you. She would even write to you, yet her hands, her dear beneficent hands, can scarce move. When I think of all the good she has done, and see her at present so unhappy, I am ready to complain.---But God will surely protect her, and out of these dreadful evils produce good.



## LETTER XXVII.

*Lady SOPHIA to EMILIA.*

O My dear EMILIA, if from this abyss of misery into which I am plunged, my voice reaches you, stretch forth a generous hand to the friend of your youth, that she may pour into your bosom her grief, and her life. Oh how severe, how extreme is the punishment of my flight! O Providence!-- But I will not arraign the dispensations of heaven. I have, for the first time in my life, conceived the idea of a kind of revenge. I have been permitted to make use of deceit; ought I not then to consider my having fallen into the power of the wicked and deceitful, as a just punishment of my fault? Why have I believed appearances? But, O God! Where is the heart like that thou hast given me; where is the heart that could entertain the thought, that good, that generous actions should proceed from bad principles?

Thou self-love art the cause of all my misery! Thou hast persuaded me to believe that LOVEILL would learn from me, to feel the charms of virtue!--He says, that "he has only deceived my hand; but that I have deceived his heart." Cruel, cruel man, such  
is

is the advantage thou takest of the probity of my heart, which sincerely endeavoured to shew thee the most cordial affection, the most solid esteem ! Ah ! Thou dost not believe that there is any such thing as virtue ; else thou wouldst have sought for it, and have found it in my soul.

It is true, my EMILIA, that there have passed some moments in which I have wished to owe my deliverance to Lord SEYMOUR ; but I tore that wish from my heart, which was filled with gratitude and esteem for the man whom I had chosen for my husband—a fatal name, how have I been able to write it ! but my faculty of thinking, and my sensations are lost, as well as my fortune, my reputation, my happiness. I am bowed down to the dust : prostrate on the earth, I entreat of heaven only to prolong my life, till I have the consolation of convincing you of the innocence of my heart, and of seeing you shed over me a tear of compassion. Then, O Providence, put an end to a life unstained with guilt ; but so wretched, that was it not for the hope of its speedy conclusion, it would be insupportable.

LET.

## LETTER XXVIII.

LOVEBILL to his Friend.

I Am bound for England; but I will first pay you a visit. Mention not a word of my last love; I will no longer think about it: it is enough that the disagreeable remembrance too often recurs to my mind against my will. My half lady has left the village, where her adventures have been as romantic as her character. She marched off in a medley of pride and resentment; tore my bill of exchange into a thousand pieces, and left behind her all the presents she had received from me. On account of this last exploit, I had some thoughts of following her; but if she could have forgiven the injury she had suffered from me, I should have despised her. It is impossible, after what has passed, that she should love me; and as I can be no longer happy with her, to what purpose should I continue the farce any longer? She must always, however, respect my veracity, and admire my knowledge of the most secret emotions of the soul. I left her quite uncertain what I should do with her; but her repeated desires to be conducted to Florence, and her threatening to repair thither without me, induced me at length to write bluntly to her as follows:

“ I



" I plainly see that you only made use of  
 " my love to escape from your uncle, and  
 " gratify your ambition. You have never  
 " been sensible of my tenderness; and have  
 " little concern about my happiness, since you  
 " set no value on any part of my character,  
 " and have no esteem for me, except when I  
 " model myself according to your fancies, and  
 " appear to adopt your whims. It is impos-  
 " sible for me to resemble the picture you have  
 " drawn before me, of the qualities you should  
 " love in a husband, because I am not SAY-  
 " MOUR: for he alone possesses that tenderness  
 " which I was desirous of meriting from you.  
 " Your confusion at my mentioning his name;  
 " the care with which you have avoided speak-  
 " ing of him; even the blandishments you  
 " have used to remove my suspicions, are proofs  
 " of your inclination for him. You are the  
 " first woman who has made me resolve on  
 " marriage; yet in forming this resolution of  
 " an union with you, I had the prudence to  
 " obtain a certainty before hand of your dis-  
 " position with respect to me, and the means  
 " I chose to employ for this purpose was, to  
 " disguise one of my men in a clergyman's  
 " habit. My love and my honour were no  
 " less bound by this pretended marriage, than  
 " if it had been formed by the primate of  
 " England, or the pope himself. But as an  
 " union of minds, which is an essential article,  
 " is wanting, I believe it will be best for us  
 " to separate without noise, and without wit-  
 " nesses,

"nesses, in the same manner as we met; for  
 "I am not so mean-spirited as to be satisfied  
 "with the possession of your charms, without  
 "having a share in your heart; nor will be such  
 "a dupe as to conduct you to England, only to  
 "oblige Lord SEYMOUR. You have no rea-  
 "son to complain, since I have snatched you  
 "from the pursuits of the prince, and the ty-  
 "ranny of your uncle. I have only deceived  
 "your hand; but you, in assuring me of a love  
 "which you did not feel, have deceived my  
 "heart. I therefore give you a full discharge."

I sent away one of my servants with this let-  
 ter, and posted to my opera girl at Berlin, as  
 to an infallible remedy against every species of  
 uneasiness, and she has accordingly restored  
 me to no small part of my former gaiety.

My brother could not have died at a more  
 convenient time than he has done. Cash be-  
 gan to run very low, and this silly romance  
 has been a little expensive, though I should not  
 have grudged what it has cost me, had she but  
 loved me, and renounced her plaguy fanaticism.  
 ---I have been so weak as to repent of my  
 letter, and to send two days ago to hear news  
 of her; but she was gone, and was much in the  
 right of it; for we neither could, nor ought to  
 have seen each other. Her letters and picture  
 I have torn in pieces, as she has done my letter  
 of exchange: but my residence at D. where  
 every body lets their tongue run about her,  
 and where every thing reminds me of her, is  
 insupportable. Prepare for me an amusing

connection worthy of an English heir, that I may take advantage of the state of freedom I have now recovered : for my father will throw the bridle over my neck as soon as I am with him. He will give me what wife he pleases, and it is certain that the devil a bit of love shall I have for her. The little I had in my heart has been devoured by this German falcon—the place is void—I feel it empty. I sometimes imagine that the ghost of my wife of six weeks, is still wandering in the places where she formerly dwelt; but I strive to drive away the imaginary phantom. Reason and circumstances justify the plan I have formed, and if I recal her to mind, either at D. or any where else, where I have been accustomed to see her, it is only the effect of habit.

But with all this I swear, that no moralist shall ever again become my mistress. Ambition and pleasure have alone votaries disposed to undertake and execute every thing for their service; they shall therefore, for the future, be my only deities: the first, because I shall obtain, by her means, all the respect and power necessary to assemble and justify every pleasing enjoyment, till the moment when my life shall be terminated by a drunken bout at an election of a member of parliament, or till the day when I shall break my neck in hunting. Admire how I have improved the ordinary qualities of a nobleman; I have, by my artifices, seduced a fine girl, and torn from her  
whatever



whatever was capable of rendering her happy. In doing this I have foolishly squandered away my fortune, and now I shall assume the character of a patriot, at horse-races and elections, and leave time to determine, whether after so much fermentation, any thing good remains at the bottom of the vessel.

### THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.